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ABSTRACT

People will debate for many years to come the causes and implications of the September 11, 2001, attacks on New York City and the Pentagon (District of Columbia). In such challenging times, educators rightly wonder about their proper role. What should they teach young U.S. students? What are the implications for the K-12 curriculum and for the work of teachers? The goal of this report is to furnish constructive advice and helpful information to educators who earnestly seek to do right by students while tackling some of the most perplexing and difficult challenges that educators face. The report is divided into four parts: (1) "Why This Report?" (Chester E. Finn, Jr.); (2) "What Children Need to Know about Terrorism, Despotism, and Democracy" (Richard Rodriguez; Walter Russell Mead; Victor Davis Hanson; Kenneth R. Weinstein; Lynne Cheney; Craig Kennedy; Andrew J. Rotherham; Kay Hymovitz; William Damon); (3) "How to Teach about Terrorism, Despotism, and Democracy" (William J. Bennett; Lamar Alexander; Erich Martel; Katherine Kersten; William Galston; Jeffrey Mirel; Mary Beth Klee; Sheldon M. Stern; Lucien Ellington); and (4) "What Teachers Need to Know about America and the World" (Abraham Lincoln introduced by Amy Kass; E.D. Hirsch, Jr.; John Agresto; Gloria Sesso; John Pyne; James Q. Wilson; Theodore Rabb; Sandra Stotsky; Ellen Shnidman; Mitchell B. Pearlstein; Stephen Schwartz; Stanley Kurtz; Tony Blair). Contains an extensive list of resources for teachers. (BT)

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Terrorists, Despots, and Democracy:

What Our Children Need to Know

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Why this Report?

Introduction by Chester E. Finn, Jr.

Americans will debate for many years to come the causes and implications of the September 11 attacks on New York City and Washington, as well as the foiled attack that led to the crash of United Airlines flight 93 in a Pennsylvania field. These assaults comprised far too traumatic an event to set aside immediately like the latest Interstate pile-up. For two years now, we have been chewing on it, agonizing about it, arguing about how to memorialize it, writing and painting and composing about it—all the things that a nation and its people do to digest, understand, and begin to recover from a cataclysm. This will continue.

Between the first and second "anniversaries" of 9/11/01, two further developments deepened our awareness of the dangerous world we inhabit and of America's role therein. The first and larger of these was the successful war to liberate Iraq from its dictator and his murderous regime. The second was the renewal of terrorist attacks upon Americans and others, most vividly in Bali in October and Riyadh in May, but also in Kuwait, Amman, Mombasa, and elsewhere, as well as ominous signs of nuclear activity by such rogue states as North Korea and Iran.

In these challenging times, educators rightly wonder about their proper role. What should they teach young Americans? How should they prepare tomorrow's citizenry? What is most important for students to learn? How best to respond to their questions and concerns? What are the implications for the K-12 curriculum and for the work of teachers?

These are solemn, weighty questions, and there is every reason to expect them to linger. America's place on the planet is no transient topic. And it is now clearer than ever that, if we wish to prepare our children for unforeseen future threats and conflicts, we must arm them with lessons from history and civics that help them learn from the victories and setbacks of their predecessors, lessons that, in Jefferson's words, "enable every man to judge for himself what will secure or endanger his freedom."

Schools and teachers do not carry the entire burden of educating the young about such momentous matters. Parents, churches, newspapers, and television—to note only the most obvious influences—also shape what children learn. But schools have a distinctive responsibility. Most other sources of information and opinion focus on current events. They are not likely to supply the relevant history and geography and civics, the deeper understanding of cultures and religions, the backgrounds and contexts, within which today's news unfolds. Such teachings are the schools' special duty.

Why This Report?

Jefferson was right when he laid upon education the grave assignment of equipping tomorrow's adults with the knowledge, values, judgment, and critical faculties to determine for them-

selves what "will secure or endanger" their freedom and their country's well-being. The U.S. Supreme Court was right, half a century ago, when, in the epoch-shaping *Brown* decision, it declared education to be "the very foundation of good citizenship."

Teachers know this better than anyone, and lots of them need no help or advice in fulfilling that responsibility. They're knowledgeable, savvy, creative, caring and—may I say it?—patriotic, as many fine teachers have always been. They love our country and the ideals for which it stands.

Others, though, are less certain. They do not know as much as they would like about these matters or are unsure how best to present them to schoolchildren. They depend on textbooks, supplementary materials, and lesson plans prepared by others. They're not sure what to teach, what's appropriate for their pupils to learn, and what their stance should be on these vexing and controversial issues. Our goal for this report is to lend them a hand, to furnish constructive advice and helpful information to educators who earnestly seek to do right by students while tackling some of the most perplexing and difficult challenges that educators face.

Nonsense (and Worse) About 9/11

We also intend this volume as an antidote to some of the dubious advice and pernicious ideas that are all too widespread within the education field.

We first detected this problem soon after September 11, 2001, as we observed the curricular and pedagogical counsel that many of the profession's myriad organizations were supplying to their members. Simply stated, it was long on multiculturalism, feelings, relativism, and tolerance but short on history, civics, and patriotism. The problem worsened as the painful "anniversary" date of 9/11/02 approached. And it worsened again during the Iraq war.

It does not exaggerate to say that the conventional wisdom on these topics that is being dispensed to educators by their ostensible leaders, particularly within the field of social studies, mirrors neither the values held by most Americans nor the innate love of democracy—and sense of accuracy and fair play—that animates most teachers.

Of what does that "conventional wisdom" consist? To answer that question, begin by recalling some of the pedagogical and curricular advice offered right after 9/11/01. The worst-lesson-of-all prize probably belonged to a Maryland teacher, one of whose pupils shared this account with the *Washington Post*: "Why do some people hate America? Why did they do it? They wanted to bomb our symbols. That's what my mom said. Because we're bossy. That's what my teacher said. She said it's because we have all the weapons and we think we can boss other countries around. They're jealous of us."

America, in this rendering, has itself to blame for the terror inflicted upon us. One is reminded of the frostier days of the Cold War, when unilateral-disarmers produced "nuclear winter"

curricula for U.S. classrooms that said, in effect, America is responsible for the world's perilous state and, if only we would renounce our militaristic ways, everyone would be far safer. (History shows just the opposite to be true.)

Not all the dubious instructional counsel that flooded the airwaves and Internet in autumn 2001 took the form of "blaming America." Much more widespread was simple disregard for patriotism and democratic institutions, non-judgmentalism toward those who would destroy them, and failure to teach about the heroism and courage of those who defend them. Plus reams of guidance about helping children deal with their own feelings and anxieties.

Article after article and web site after web site counseled teachers to promote tolerance, peace, understanding, empathy, diversity, and multiculturalism. Here, for example, are excerpts from a broadside by the National Association of School Psychologists:

> A natural reaction to horrific acts of violence like the recent terrorist attacks on the United States is the desire to lash out and punish the perpetrators. . . . While anger is a normal response felt by many, we must ensure that we do not compound an already great tragedy. . . . Most importantly, adults must model tolerance and compassion in their words and behavior. They should also encourage children to explore their feelings about prejudice and hate. . . . Violence and hate are never solutions to anger. . . . All people deserve to be treated with fairness, respect and dignity. . . Vengeance and justice are not necessarily the same. . . . We need to work for peace in our communities and around the world. The best way that we can stand up for our country at this point is to unite behind the principals [sic] that make us strong. . . . Tolerance is a lifelong endeavor. . . . Avoid stereotyping people or countries that might be home to the terrorists. . . . Address the issue of blame factually. . . . Do not suggest any group is responsible. Do not repeat the speculations of others, including newscasters. . . . Discuss how it would feel to be blamed unfairly by association. . . . Emphasize positive, familiar images of diverse ethnic groups. . . . Read books with your children that address prejudice, tolerance, and hate.

Some of that is needed, to be sure, but rarely was it suggested that teachers should also read books with their pupils that address patriotism, freedom, and democracy; that deal realistically with the presence of evil, danger, and anti-Americanism in the world; or that hail the heroism of those who for more than two centuries have defended our land against foreign aggressors—including our debt to those who perished on 9/11/01.

In an article in the *Washington Post* that autumn, several leading educators said the lesson of the attacks was that U.S. schools must focus more on multiculturalism and that our indifference to other cultures somehow made us culpable for the terrorists' actions. We were at fault. The victim should be blamed for his victimization.

For example, the president of Columbia University's Teachers College, Arthur Levine, often a level-headed fellow, said in this article that "Our notion of great books can't be Western any-

more or wholly Western anymore. Is *Middlemarch* [a 19th-century English novel by George Eliot] more important than the Koran in terms of the curriculum?" Levine did not explain why the Koran should become a major component of the American curriculum, nor whether he would insist that teachers also introduce studies in the Old and New Testaments and, perhaps, the Bhagavad-Gita and the Book of Mormon.

The second chapter in this unhappy story was written by education experts opining in scholarly journals about the "educational meanings of September 11th." The good news is that few firing-line educators read such journals. The bad news is that the people who write in them are also, characteristically, the men and women who prepare future teachers in our colleges of education.

Consider an essay in *Teachers College Record* by Marxist education historian Michael Apple. What he sought with his students at the University of Wisconsin, he wrote, was "to use this as a time to show the effects of U.S. global economic, political, and cultural policies." But it wouldn't do simply to "impose" his views on his students. Not only would that be its own form of imperialism and arrogance; it might also "push people into rightist positions." Heaven forbid! So he was more strategic. His strategy included helping his students examine the Madison school board's squalid response to a state law mandating the Pledge of Allegiance or the singing of the *Star Spangled Banner*, which Apple terms "a strikingly militaristic song." But you don't really need to know more about his agonized pedagogical strategy. What you need to know is that Apple believes that "social criticism is the ultimate act of patriotism." Where but on a university campus would the act of criticizing trump the need to ensure that young people have a firm grasp upon that which they are examining? Where else would patriotism commence with negative rather than positive attitudes? Keep in mind that Apple and his ilk are preparing tomorrow's instructors of eight- and ten- and fourteen-year-olds.

Closer to the practitioner level, in May 2002 the National Council for the Social Studies recycled on its website a short story, "My Name is Osama," that had first been published in a teachers' supplement called *Middle Level Learning*. Written by Sharifa Alkhateeb, president of the Muslim Education Council and director of the "Peaceful Families Project" (supported in part by the U.S. Justice Department), it is a brief and rather touching story of how an Iraqi immigrant boy with the unfortunate name of Osama is gratuitously teased, heckled, even bullied, in a U.S. school because of his name and national origin.

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Such a story can be a legitimate part of a comprehensive effort to ensure that young Americans' responses to 9/11 and events in the Middle East do not include bias toward their Arab and Muslim classmates. What one wants to know, however, is whether the rest of such a comprehensive effort is also there, the civics part, the history part, the harsher lessons about how difficult it is to safeguard American values from those who despise them in an increasingly menacing world. Why had Osama and his family migrated to U.S. shores? What is it that they came for? Why was it important to them? Where is that part of the lesson?

The popular education polemicist Alfie Kohn, best known for his animus toward standards and testing, joined the fray in a publication called *Rethinking Schools*. His main point: "The United States has no problem with terrorism as long as its victims don't live here or look like most of us." It's the "so's your old man" response to a playground scuffle, here magnified to the scale of an assault on the nation itself. Kohn devoted most of his essay to itemizing instances of what he views as American-sponsored terrorism in other lands. Not a word about patriotism there either. No context for the often-agonizing decisions made by America's leaders, context that would enable students to understand what was going on in the world, what was at stake, and why decisions were made as they were. And of course, no recognition that, as British Prime Minister Tony Blair (whose July 2003 speech before the U.S. Congress is excerpted in this report) put it in a speech in January 2003,

> For all their faults and all nations have them, the U.S. are a force for good; they have liberal and democratic traditions of which any nation can be proud. I sometimes think it is a good rule of thumb to ask of a country: are people trying to get into it or out of it? It's not a bad guide to what sort of country it is.

As 9/11/02 neared, more nonsense spewed forth. More rotten advice—relativistic, non-judgmental (except about the United States), pacifist, and anything but patriotic. It took sound American values such as tolerance and carried them to extremes. Most important was what it left out: the crucial lessons from history and civics that our children most need to learn and that this painful episode creates a powerful opportunity to teach our daughters and sons: about heroes and villains, freedom and repression, hatred and nobility, democracy and theocracy, civic virtue and vice.

The biggest, richest and politically most influential of our education organizations is the National Education Association (NEA), which created a special web site called "Remember September 11." As one browsed its recommended lessons and background guidance for teachers, the dominant impression was one of psychotherapy via the Internet. But political agendas slipped in, too. A journalist plumbing the NEA website found, for example, the union urging teachers not to "suggest any group is responsible" for the 9/11 attacks. Not surprisingly, the NEA's advice was applauded by the Council on American Islamic Relations, whose spokeswoman termed the union's curricular materials " a well-balanced, wide range of resources teachers can use to help teach students how to appreciate diversity."

What is "well-balanced"? Is "diversity" the whole story—all that needs to be taught and learned? So one might gather from the NEA and other organizations. This was certainly the case with a special "teachable moments" website maintained by the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS). As that organization's president, Adrian Davis, explained, its goal was to help "social studies educators . . . reinforce the ideals of tolerance, equity, and social justice against a backlash of antidemocratic sentiments and hostile divisions." Nothing there about accurate history of the U.S., the Middle East, Islam or the world. Nothing there about demo-

cratic values and their protection. Certainly nothing about patriotism. Everything was either about tolerance or about mental health.

More Nonsense (and Worse) About Iraq

The Iraq War brought still more waves of bad curricular advice. The American Red Cross, which had never bothered to instruct young Americans on the inhumane practices of Saddam Hussein's Ba'athist regime nor to call their attention to its torture chambers, genocide, and mass graves, decided to put the Pentagon's battlefield conduct under the K-12 microscope. It commissioned (from a sociology professor at the University of Wisconsin) a curricular unit called "Exploring Humanitarian Law." While it is good to teach young people about the Geneva Conventions and make them aware that even war has rules and conventions, it seems very odd indeed to focus on this with children who had little or no understanding of the undeclared war that Saddam was waging—unencumbered by any rules—against his own people. Who knew next to nothing about Iraq. And whose weak grasp of history means they could have little understanding of when, how, and why these "conventions" came into being in the first place.

One also wonders whether the Red Cross's choice of music, paintings, and "choral readings," even for high school students, is the best possible way to convey "facts about terrorism and war." And one notes with dismay that, in the Red Cross's hypothetical war between "Gargantua" and "Freelandia," neither side is assigned any motive, no causes for the fighting are even hinted at, and no moral judgments are rendered except that an unexplained conflict between two imaginary nations led to human suffering on both sides of the border. It's reminiscent of the late Dr. Seuss's pathetic effort to depict the Cold War (for young children) as nothing more than a dispute between people who prefer butter on top of their bread and those who would rather eat it on the bottom.

The Red Cross is not alone. Innumerable other organizations, large and small, got into the act. *Time* magazine's web-based classroom guide also urged teachers to emphasize the Geneva Conventions and the question of whether there is such a thing as a "humane war." PBS—in an internet series of lesson suggestions called "NewsHour with Jim Lehrer specials for students"—offered a lesson plan from a Virginia social studies teacher called "The Decision to Go to War" that posed some good questions but, while asking students to reflect on the "risks" and "costs" of doing battle in Iraq, never got around to the possible benefits for Iraqis or the world. All it could muster on the "pro" side of the decision was a murky discussion of President Bush's "motivations." Moreover, to link this lesson to the regular curriculum, PBS sought—as it customarily does—to tie it to some of the most appalling of the "national standards" in social studies, including the dubious version promulgated by the NCSS.

The NCSS itself publishes a widely circulated magazine for teachers called *Social Education*, which in April 2003 contained a special section on "War With Iraq." As usual, its main thrust

was to urge educators to help children deal with their feelings and concerns, not to inform or explain things to them. To teachers of teenagers, the NCSS experts suggested that the "stress" and "uncertainty" of war might worsen student's already bothersome "hormonal shifts." As for content—manifestly a lesser concern—experienced teachers offered a couple of decently balanced lessons, but many of the suggestions for further reading and materials steered teachers and students to highly ideological anti-war organizations.

Perhaps the worst of these is a much-cited outfit called Rethinking Schools (www.rethinkingschools.org). Its suggestions on "The War and Our Students"—a report that was sent to middle and high school teachers across the country, thanks to a $30,000 grant from the Ford Foundation—opens with an interview of an Oregon high school teacher who was primarily concerned that her pupils apply "critical thinking skills" to the

> corporate media presentation of this war. I want my students to understand the use of propaganda and the silencing of dissent. . . . I was afraid that blind patriotism would prevent students from seeing and thinking clearly. . . . [U]nless students are grounded in a deep critique of globalization, they are not going to be able to come up with an in-depth analysis of their own. That is why I am anxious to continue my teaching on globalization. That is how they're going to come to understand the war.

Rethinking Schools goes on at interminable length in this vein. It is joined by some of the old disarmament outfits that had languished since the Cold War's end but now have a new mission. Prominent among these is a group called Educators for Social Responsibility, which is deeply concerned about anti-Arab discrimination but also supplies lessons on such questions as "Iraq: Should the U.S. Launch a Preemptive Attack?" The readings offered for students and teachers, though nominally balanced, plainly emphasize war critics and subtly seek to persuade youngsters that the Bush Iraq policy was unjustified and misguided.

Obviously, there are legitimate differences of opinion about the war in Iraq—some of which show up in this volume. But the most pervasive problem in nearly all of this guidance is its push to turn children into junior foreign policy advisors whose expression of "opinions" about Iraq and Bush and war are the chief classroom objective. Like so much constructivist pedagogy, the goal is getting kids to form judgments. What's missing is the information with which to form them. How many American youngsters can even find Iraq on a world map? How many know its history, its ethnic make-up, how the Ba'ath Party came to power, and what sort of ruler Saddam Hussein was? How many possess even the most rudimentary knowledge of the Middle East—not to mention the larger historical context, such as how the world's democracies have dealt with tyrants and despots in other times and places?

The Middle East is not the only place in the world that impels adults to devise pedagogical strategies whose foremost purpose is to nudge students into acting like Henry Kissinger or Condoleezza Rice. A venture called "The Choices Program" at Brown University's Watson

Institute for International Studies specializes in creating such lesson plans for high-school teachers. A recent unit on nuclear weapons in North Korea, for example, while accurate in its (extremely abbreviated) background information, focuses on four sharply contrasting "policy options" for the United States. Teachers are urged to divide their classes into small groups, assign each group an option and ask it to "make the best possible case for this option." There is nothing wrong with such an activity. But its purpose is for students to form and debate opinions, not to learn as much as the teacher can teach them about North Korea and what is at stake when such regimes acquire nuclear arsenals.

As educators were being counseled to transform pupils into mini-pundits, the celebrated historian David McCullough was telling a Senate committee (on April 10, 2003) that "We are raising a generation of people who are historically illiterate. . . . We can't function in a society," he explained, "if we don't know who we are and where we came from. . . . When you have students at our Ivy League colleges saying they thought Germany and Japan were our allies in World War II, you know we've got a very serious problem."

The Textbook Problem

Who and what are those "historically illiterate" young people to learn history from? A distressingly large fraction of their teachers never studied much history themselves and thus must depend on lesson plans, textbooks, and instructional materials prepared by others. This makes them **and, ultimately, their** pupils vulnerable to manipulation by those who write and publish such things. Nor is the Internet the only place where instructional materials are often biased, both in what they include and what they leave out. As Diane Ravitch's brilliant new book, *The Language Police*, demonstrates, self-censorship and "anti-bias" guidelines among authors and publishers result in textbooks (and even test questions) that are both boring and politically correct. Anything that could conceivably offend anybody is omitted or doctored. This problem grows especially acute when the topic at hand is Islamic fundamentalism and its link to terrorism. Here, an accurate rendering is sure to set off alarm bells in such watchdog organizations as the Council on Islamic Education, as well as upsetting the political sensibilities of the American academics who are invited to write textbooks. What gets published, therefore, is subtly and not-so-subtly slanted to give only favorable impressions of Islam and to avoid any suggestion that its more radical adherents may pose a problem for the United States in particular and free societies in general.

Gilbert Sewall of the American Textbook Council recently undertook a close examination of seven widely used secondary-school world-history textbooks. Here is what he found:

> On controversial subjects, world history textbooks make an effort to circumvent unsavory facts that might cast Islam past or present in anything but a positive light. . . . Subjects such as *jihad* and the advocacy of violence among militant Islamists to attain worldly ends,

> the imposition of *sharia* law, the record of Muslim enslavement, and the brutal subjection of women are glossed over. . . . World history textbooks hold Islam and other non-Western civilizations to different standards than those that apply to the West. . . . For Islamists, the kind of cultural criticism and analysis that enchants American academics is unimaginable. . . . [T]heir collaborators are a handful of textbook editors … who determine what basic instructional materials used in classrooms nationwide say about Islamic history and its significance for the 21st century. During the last two decades, world history textbooks and the social studies editors who oversee their development have moved from the neglect of Islamic history to self-censorship. Any textbook negatives about Islam have been erased, replaced by fulsome praise and generalities designed to quell complaints from Islamists and their allies.

Which brings us back to Jefferson's admonition that education "enables every man to judge for himself what will secure or endanger his freedom." How can ignorant people make such judgments? How can uninformed children possibly respond in a useful way to the toughest questions that perplex adults? Of what value is it to encourage students to act like TV's talking heads if their heads are empty? What will be learned if pupils' main sources of information are themselves biased or sanitized? And how does it strengthen America for the future if it is raising a generation of ignorant citizens whose teachers are urged not to inform them of the truth but, rather, to press them to feel good about themselves while "thinking critically" about events for which they have no context, background, or information base?

Offering an Alternative

To help educators think differently about their responsibilities vis-à-vis the education of children about "terrorists, despots, and democracy," we at the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation sought help from experts. We did this first in summer 2002, when we invited several dozen scholars, analysts, and practitioners to write brief essays that answered this question: "What civic lessons are the most imperative for U.S. K-12 teachers to teach their pupils, as the 'anniversary' of the September 11th attacks draws near, about the United States and what it means to be an American?" Though we gave them only a short time, most responded affirmatively and we "published" their 23 contributions, together with suggestions for additional readings, on our website in August 2002. You can find it at http://edexcellence.net/Sept11/September11.html.

Modest as that contribution was, it struck a chord with many educators and others who responded with enthusiasm and sometimes gratitude (and sometimes outrage!) to those suggestions. Some urged us to turn it from a "virtual publication" into a real one that they could more readily share with colleagues, students, and parents. We have now done so, while also inviting the 2002 authors to update their essays—17 of them chose to do so—and asking additional experts and veteran practitioners to join them.

The result before you consists of 29 essays. We claim no credit for Lincoln's stirring Lyceum Address, which, as Amy Kass explains, is as relevant today as in 1838, or for Tony Blair's recent speech to the U.S. Congress. But the other essays were written solely in response to our request. This year, we asked their authors specifically to reflect on Jefferson's quote and to supply educators with advice as to what American school children need to know if they are to be well prepared to judge for themselves what will "secure or endanger [their] freedom."

Yes, Jefferson, too, was a constructivist. He yearned for people to be able to judge for themselves. And that's our goal as well, so long as those judgments are informed and the essential knowledge, contexts, and understandings are in place. How best to get students to that point? Please read on.

As you will see, the authors range from prominent public figures through an array of scholars and analysts, and well-known public figures, to practitioners whose names are far from household words. Some are Democrats, some Republicans. Some have a national perspective, some a state purview, others a local or classroom focus. We sought a range of perspectives but we did not seek people who would repeat the conventional wisdom of the social studies field—there's already plenty of that for anyone who wants it. Nor did we look for people who would psychologize the topic or whose reverence for tolerance dwarfs their appreciation of other compelling civic values. Above all, we sought people who take history and civics seriously, people who take America seriously. You will judge their contributions for yourself.

As we prepared this collection, I again found myself missing the late Albert Shanker, longtime head of the American Federation of Teachers, who epitomized and revered the teaching of essential historical information and civic values to young Americans. Al and I had plenty of differences, but we disagreed not at all about what children need to learn. Diane Ravitch has recalled what Shanker said at an international meeting (on education for democracy) in Prague two years before his death: "He warned the participants in a civic education dialogue from across Western and Eastern Europe to avoid multiculturalism and diversity, which fan the flames of ethnocentrism, and instead to pursue democracy. I found Al very persuasive, as always, then and now." So do I. He never flinched from asserting that the job of the schools is to teach the common culture, the history of democracy, and the centrality of freedom and its defense against aggressors. Though Shanker's view remains the exception within the education field, we can begin to detect signs of widening awareness, even in academe, that democracy needs defenders if it is to endure and spread. At the June 2003 commissioning ceremony for new officers emerging from his university's long-embattled ROTC program, Harvard president Lawrence Summers had this to say:

> If we are strong because we are free, I would tell you also that we are free because we are strong. Because. . . the hard truth is that there is evil in this world. The reality is that as much as we may debate the meaning of truth, there are some truths beyond debate. . . . We may wish that it were otherwise, but in this world—at this time—we are free because

we are strong and we must be grateful to those who support the strength of our country: the men and women of the U.S. military.

Such views remain rare on our campuses, in our teacher training colleges, in our K-12 textbooks, and in the professional journals of the education field. But they dwell in the hearts and minds of many teachers, whose intentions are sound and whose efforts are tireless. We hope that this volume proves useful to them, and we wish them well in their vital work of preparing another generation of Americans who understand what democracy is and why it's worth defending.

My thanks to the 29 essayists who responded with alacrity and good cheer to our invitation to participate in this project and whose excellent suggestions fill the pages that follow. Thanks, too, to Diane Ravitch for suggesting this report and helping it take shape; to Fordham associate research director (and veteran social studies teacher) Kathleen Porter, who did the heavy lifting on this edition; to former research associate Kelly Scott, who ushered the first one into existence; and to Emilia Ryan, who designed and laid it out. Please note that it is not copyrighted, and readers are encouraged to share copies with others who may find it interesting or helpful.

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Chester E. Finn, Jr., President
Washington, DC
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What Children Need to Know About Terrorism, Despotism, and Democracy

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September 11 was a horrific but clarifying event. It transformed our politics, which, since the end of the Cold War, had focused on smaller things—on carefully crafted appeals to minute segments of the electorate on issues such as fuel efficiency, school uniforms, or housing vouchers. In an instant, we understood that the American ideals of freedom, tolerance, and individual self-determination were themselves under attack. After a decade-long holiday from history that began with the breaching of the Berlin Wall, America pulled herself together to confront an enemy implacably opposed to our way of life.

That transformation has been felt at every level of our politics, from the shape of the federal government to the new focus on unity in our culture. And after the acid test of 9/11, new and difficult questions began to be asked of our schools. Were they adequately preparing young Americans for a life of engaged citizenship in a representative democracy? Were they arming students with a working knowledge of American history and American ideals? Were they giving children the intellectual tools to weigh the tough national choices that lay ahead—whether or not to topple Saddam's regime, how best to confront radical Islam, how to aid the spread of freedom around the world, and more?

After a decade-long holiday from history that began with the breaching of the Berlin Wall, America pulled herself together to confront an enemy implacably opposed to our way of life.

In the essays of this section, a diverse group of public intellectuals, education practitioners, historians, and analysts lays out some of the larger curricular implications for K-12 education in the post-9/11 era. What, exactly, do our children need to know about terrorism, war, America, and the world? Many points are raised and suggestions made, but two seem paramount.

The first, stated explicitly by Richard Rodriguez and echoed elsewhere, is that free government of, by, and for a free people is never—not here, not anywhere—inevitable. As Victor Davis Hanson puts it, "Freedom, democracy, an independent judiciary, and the dignity of the individual are not innate to the human species," and Lynne Cheney adds that, despite our 20/20 hindsight, the American experiment from the first seemed fragile and was by no means easy to perpetuate. Careful tending and constant maintenance with the help of education—and, as Walter Russell Mead points out, sometimes overt acts of heroism—are required to transmit the fruits of that experiment to future generations.

The second is that our admirable impulse to tolerate cultural and intellectual differences has slipped into a kind of practical moral relativism. This relativism—which springs from what Kenneth Weinstein calls the "quintessentially American virtue of niceness"—has made schools and educators all but unable to help children distinguish between good and bad regimes, between governments that espouse and protect freedom and governments that don't. While

Craig Kennedy would have us defend the American notion of tolerance, properly understood, William Damon wants our schools to have the courage to "give students a living sense of what the absence of freedom really means in some parts of the world." And Andrew Rotherham and Kay Hymowitz offer broad guidance on what an education that does these things might look like in the light of September 11.

America: Always Vulnerable, Never Inevitable

Richard Rodriguez

Through the dust of September 11, America's children need to see clearly a terrible truth: There is nothing inevitable about our civilization—nothing inevitable about American individualism, freedom of movement and social mobility, or our secular tolerance. All can be undone.

For my parents, immigrants to this country, America seemed surprising and new. On the other hand, because I was born here I assumed America. I assumed that my parents' hard work would gain us passage to the middle class; I assumed that women and men of every race could vote; I assumed freedom of opinion, just as I assumed that people of various religions could live as neighbors.

Perhaps such rosy assumptions are inevitable in the young. The old know change; the young know only the given. Similarly, because America is a young nation, we easily assume our civilization as a given. Older nations, by contrast, have seen their great cities toppled, the beliefs and assumptions of generations overturned overnight.

As a boy, I loved American history, precisely for its lack of tragedy. Everything led happily to me, living at 935 39th Street in Sacramento, California.

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When I was in school, U.S. history classes seemed happily fated. There were past calamities, to be sure—slavery, the massacre of Indians, the mistreatments suffered by the poor—but these were mere obstacles to the present, obstacles overcome by battles or treaties or acts of Congress, or by the lucky coincidence of heroic lives and national need. As a boy, I loved American history, precisely for its lack of tragedy. I loved Ben Franklin and the stories of the Underground Railroad and the New Deal, because everything led happily to me, living at 935 39th Street in Sacramento, California.

The man awoke, years later, to see jet airliners (the symbol of our mobility) turned against us by terrorists; to see the collapse of the World Trade Center (the symbol of our global capi-

talism); to see a wall of the Pentagon (the assurance of our self-defense) in flame. What I realized that Tuesday morning is that America is vulnerable to foreign attack.

But I wonder now if we understand that our civilization has always been vulnerable. Our American values and laws emerged over time, after false starts and despite many near-reversals. For example, our tradition of religious tolerance and secularism, that today makes America home to every religion in the world, was not born easily or quickly. Mormons, Jews, Catholics—a variety of persons have in the past suffered religious persecution at the hands of their American neighbors. Today, to their and our shame, there are some in America who attack Muslims.

Lacking a sense of the tragic in U.S. history books, our children never are taught that America finally was formed against and despite the mistakes and reversals we committed against our own civilization. Now, our children glance up to wonder at the low-flying plane on the approaching horizon. They need, also, to look back in time, to see America ever-invented, forged through difficult decades into a civilization. That civilization was always at risk. Always vulnerable. Never inevitable. Not just because of threats from without. But from our own ignorance of all we possessed.

Richard Rodriguez is the author of a trilogy on American public life and his own life: *Hunger of Memory, Days of Obligation,* and *Brown.*

Forging Heroes

Walter Russell Mead

We did not discover on September 11, 2001 that we have enemies, or even that we live in a dangerous world. What we discovered that day was that organized groups of terrorists have both the will and the ability to create terrible devastation within the United States. Americans today face a new kind of danger; the world we live in is not a peaceful place nor one in which our security can be taken for granted.

That was the bad news, and there is no point in pretending that it isn't serious and disturbing. From the President on down, Americans are rightly concerned and worried about the dangers we face.

But September 11 also gave rise to some good news. First and foremost, there was the courage and heroism that so many Americans showed on that fateful day. There were the heroes of the

New York City police and fire departments who ran into burning buildings to help victims escape. There were the hundreds of workers in the World Trade Center who helped one another get out. There were the heroes on Flight 93 who, when it was clear that the terrorists who had hijacked their plane were intent on using it as a weapon, organized a counterattack that foiled the hijackers and saved untold lives in Washington, D.C. At a moment's notice, as soon as danger struck, hundreds and thousands of ordinary Americans who were going about their ordinary business—ordinary Americans who were Muslims, Christians and Jews; men and women; all races, all ethnic groups, all age groups; people from all parts of the country and all walks of life—all of a sudden turned into heroes.

All students should be encouraged to think about what makes heroes and how—like Gotham's policemen and firemen—we can all be heroes in our daily lives.

Americans showed on September 11 that we are still a nation of heroes. All students should be encouraged to think about what makes heroes and how—like Gotham's policemen and firemen who continued doing the right thing even when it became difficult and dangerous—we can all be heroes in our daily lives.

Younger students should also be reassured that policemen, firemen, teachers, and other adults stand ready to protect them if danger strikes. Moreover, Congress and the President are working to strengthen our defenses against new attacks. Protecting the American people from new terrorist attacks is now our government's number one priority. That is good news and students should understand it.

Finally, students should reflect on our values and the values that shape American society. We don't want to live in the kind of world the terrorists want to make—a world ruled by fear, one in which there is only one way to think and believe. Students should think about what freedom means in their own lives and why it is worth defending.

22 Walter Russell Mead is a senior fellow on U.S. foreign policy at the Council on Foreign Relations.

Preserving America, Man's Greatest Hope

Victor Davis Hanson

September 11, 2001 brought back to us ancient wisdom that has often been forgotten or caricatured in this age of multiculturalism, situational ethics, and moral relativism. Freedom, democracy, an independent judiciary, and the dignity of the individual are not innate to the human species. They are fragile ideas that must be taught to our youth in each generation—and then protected by us all from enemies who will always fear and hate us for what we are, and who will therefore often strive to destroy all that we hold dear.

Not all cultures are equal in their moral sensibilities; few dictators, theocrats, tribal leaders, or communists welcome the introspection and self-criticism that are necessary for moral improvement. So before we seek guidance from others abroad or adjust our policies to an apparent international consensus, Americans must first ask of other nations in the world: do their people vote, do they respect the rights of women, do they enjoy freedom, and can they express themselves without audit or censorship? Such requisites are as valid for the United Nations as they are for other nations, especially when an autocratic China is on the Security Council and many voting members of the General Assembly would never extend such democratic privileges to their own people.

Not all cultures are equal in their moral sensibilities; few dictators, theocrats, tribal leaders, or communists welcome the self-criticism necessary for moral improvement.

Americans should also remember that we are a multiracial society—the world's most successful—bound together by a shared commitment to Western values and the U.S. Constitution. Although we are of every color, religion, and ethnic background, we are not a multicultural state. True, we are enriched by music, food, and literature from abroad, but not by the world's bleak alternatives to freedom, open markets, constitutional government, and the rule of law. The terrorists killed us precisely for our shared core values, for our *unum*, not our *pluribus*.

The idea of cultural relativism was blown apart by the terrorists as surely as our architectural icons in New York and Washington. The failure to exercise moral judgment—denying that Islamic fundamentalism and fascism is a great plague upon the world that would destroy the rights of women, the very notion of religious tolerance, and all the gifts of the Enlightenment—is not proof of forbearance, but of abject ethical decrepitude. All the great evils of the 19th and 20th centuries—chattel slavery, German Nazism, Japanese militarism, and Soviet communism—led to the ruin of countless millions of innocents because millions of other Westerners were either too timorous, too confused, too ignorant of, or reticent about, their innately evil natures and the great peril each posed to free peoples.

By the same token, we must take up the challenge of civic education—through the reading of seminal texts and uncensored, candid class discussion—to end the dangerous idea of moral equivalence. In the present conflict, we must reject the notion that the loss of innocent civilians deliberately murdered in a time of peace is somehow the same as accidental civilian deaths that occur from efforts to punish evildoers during a time of war. The moral choice that confronts man tragically has never been the stark antithesis between wholly good and purely evil, but rather the obligation to distinguish the mostly good from the mostly bad. The demand for perfection as a prerequisite for action is not only utopian and unworkable, but in our present crisis fatal for millions who depend on the United States to back its moral vision with real power to thwart killers and protect the weak and innocent.

We must take up the challenge of civic education—through the reading of seminal texts and candid class discussion—to end the dangerous idea of moral equivalence.

Finally, we should always be mindful of the limits that are imposed upon our brief lives by nature and by God. History teaches that those omnipotent angels who would solve all man's problems if just granted enough power over others—to create a new master race or a new proletariat man—end up as abject devils. Racism, sexism, homophobia, and economic exploitation: these are the sins not of America, but of man himself. We feel these oppressions more acutely than others in the world precisely because we alone have the institutions, the power, and the will to battle and often overcome them. But in our heightened expectations, for instance redress, we should never allow our occasional disappointments as mere humans to change or subvert America—the nature of its laws, the spirit of its constitution, the telling of its past or the culture of its people—which history proves has offered man his last and greatest hope.

Victor Davis Hanson is an historian and author most recently of *Carnage and Culture* and *An Autumn of War.*

The Perils of Complacency and Limits of Niceness

Kenneth R. Weinstein

A key reason that al Qaeda operatives wreaked havoc on 9/11 is that virtually no one, especially among our political and cultural elites, believed that our national security was in any serious jeopardy. Our system of democratic capitalism exacerbated that naiveté by leading us to believe that other societies offered mirror images of our own. Prior to September 11, both the American right and left suffered from a similar hubris: that liberal democracy, with its promise of prosperity and individual fulfillment, was soon to triumph throughout the world.

The libertarian right fosters the conviction that capitalism dissolves traditional barriers by bringing individuals together on the ground of self-interest. The cultural left admits these differences but, because of its own tendency toward relativism and multiculturalism, cannot come to grips with the radical character of genuine difference. It views cultural diversity and national differences as mere matters of taste, asserting that the greatest crime of all is judgmentalism.

The quintessentially American virtue of niceness blinded us to the profound difference between our way of life and theirs.

Strangely enough, these right and left wing dogmas culminate in the same social characteristic: the quintessentially American virtue of niceness, which, in the end, blinded us to the profound difference between our way of life and theirs, and made us less suspicious of the terrorists in our midst than we ought to have been.

Yet it is not simply our naïve benevolence that made us vulnerable. One might say that an even less admirable quality—namely, looking away from tyranny, a refusal to recognize it for what it is—was omnipresent before 9/11. In Query 18 of his *Notes on the State of Virginia*, Jefferson wrote on the dehumanizing effects of slavery:

> The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submissions on the other. Our children see this, and learn to imitate it; for man is an imitative animal. This quality is the germ of all education in him. From his cradle to his grave he is learning to do what he sees others do. . . . The parent storms, the child looks on, catches the lineaments of wrath, puts on the same airs in the circle of smaller slaves, gives a loose to his worst of passions, and thus nursed, educated, and daily exercised in tyranny, cannot but be stamped by it with odious peculiarities. The man must be a prodigy who can retain his manners and morals undepraved by such circumstances.

Slavery thus coarsened one's sensibilities—and those of one's children—to the point that the worst injustices became tolerable. In a much less acute manner, Americans have similarly inured themselves to the existence of tyrannies across the globe. There is only a very loose correspondence between the daily education to tyranny that Jefferson diagnosed and our toleration for such despotic politics. The latter do not impinge on our daily lives, nor consequently form our characters with vicious habits. But in their remoteness, they also fail to function as a necessary reproach to the complacency with which we enjoy our liberties. We need to be mindful always that liberal democracy is not a gift of the gods, that it is precious and can easily be lost if we do not remind ourselves of both its virtues and its vulnerabilities.

An American populace cognizant of Osama bin Laden's intent would never have allowed our shores to harbor his lieutenants.

Through one of the most costly civics lessons ever, our generation has learned the price of such complacency. The lesson ended in dramatic fashion on September 11 as the passengers of United Airlines flight 93, in true Tocquevillian fashion, formed a spontaneous voluntary association to wrest the cockpit from the hijackers and save the U.S. Capitol from destruction.

And America has responded likewise since 9/11, ending our complacency about international tyranny. By leading coalitions to overthrow the Taliban and Saddam Hussein, an era of relative isolation has been transformed into one of unparalleled interventionism, as we seek to bring, as far as is prudentially possible, the blessings of the Declaration of Independence to all mankind.

Complacency, though, is bound to re-appear in the future, especially if presidential leadership and American ingenuity forestall further horrific attacks on our homeland. Americans need to maintain their vigilance against the unpredictable nature of such threats. Such vigilance is a cornerstone to any effective homeland defense.

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Teachers of civics have a special role to play by promoting this vigilance as a corrective to the niceness that has become an American virtue. We need instead to recognize America's challenged status in the world. One good way to keep the challenge always before us would be to take seriously the hate-filled words of our enemies. An American populace cognizant of Osama bin Laden's intent would never have allowed our shores to harbor his lieutenants.

In the end, though, it is not our enemy's words that should be the focus of study and reflection, but our own—the words and deeds of our founders and greatest heroes.

Kenneth R. Weinstein is vice president and chief operating officer of Hudson Institute.

Protecting Our Precious Liberty

Lynne Cheney

Today, as before September 11, 2001, the most important civics lessons for American children are found in American history. What better way, for example, to understand the religious freedom that underlies our democracy—and distinguishes us from those who attacked us on 9/11—than to consider Thomas Jefferson's long struggle to establish the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom? Assisted by James Madison, he worked for years to pass this law, which was a precursor to the First Amendment. We need to teach our children what an achievement it was to enact a statute declaring that individuals could be trusted to arrive at their own conclusions in matters of faith. The Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom, Madison said, "extinguished forever the ambitious hope of making laws for the human mind."

The fact that invention, entertainment, and commerce have prospered so remarkably on these shores is proof of the power of our ideas, and our children should know this.

The issue was not only religious freedom, but also intellectual freedom. "Truth is great and will prevail if left to herself," the Virginia statute reads. "She is the proper and sufficient antagonist to error, and has nothing to fear from the conflict, unless by human interposition [she is] disarmed of her natural weapons, free argument and debate." Anyone who tries to account for the remarkable creativity of this country needs to consider the forces set in motion when the United States of America decreed that the government could not tell its people what to believe or what to think. The freeing up of individual energy and ideas that followed has been unparalleled in human history. Try to imagine the Wright brothers, or Steven Spielberg, or Bill Gates in an oppressive society. It is inconceivable that they would flourish. The fact that invention, entertainment, and commerce have prospered so remarkably on these shores is proof of the power of our ideas, and our children should know this.

We should teach them how hard the establishment of this country was. We should help them learn how perilous was the voyage that the Pilgrims undertook, how risky was the declaration that we would be a free and independent nation, how unlikely to endure—if one judged by prior history—was the republic established in Philadelphia in 1787. It is important that our children and grandchildren understand that things might have turned out otherwise. This realization makes our freedom all the more precious. It helps us to understand that, were we to lose it, liberty might not come our way again.

Students need to know the ideals on which our country was founded, in particular the idea that all are created equal. They need to know as well how brave men and women like Elizabeth

Cady Stanton and Martin Luther King, Jr. called upon us to live up to our founding ideals and thus helped make us a better country.

The September 11 attack on our country underscored the importance of instructing the rising generation in American history. In a time of war, our children deserve to know exactly what is at stake.

Lynne Cheney is a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C.

Defending American Tolerance

Craig Kennedy

Some commentators have tried to argue that the United States was targeted on 9/11 because of the irresponsible use of American economic and military power in the rest of the world. In this wrong-headed view, al Qaeda was simply attacking an "imperialist power." However, the real core of Osama bin Laden's hatred of America is his opposition to open, secular, and democratic societies where individuals have rights that are not linked to their religion, gender, sexual orientation, or ethnicity. For fanatics of all stripes, the basic freedoms that Americans enjoy—and defend so vigorously—are a threat to their goal of creating societies based on narrow and unforgiving ideologies that have little room for the civil and political liberties that we take for granted. In the 21st century, the threats to democratic states will come from states and organizations that view democratic and open societies as the enemy.

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The United States has created an atmosphere in which immigrants, religious minorities, and others outside of the mainstream are actively integrated into our society.

We should be proud of American tolerance. In the days after September 11, some feared we would see a great outpouring of anti-Islamic and anti-Arab sentiment in the United States. Despite a few well-publicized attacks, however, most Americans had the opposite reaction. They reached out to their Islamic and Arab neighbors; stood guard outside mosques and Arab cultural centers; and bought books by the thousands on Islam and the Arab world. While others want to view us as a racist and intolerant country, the United States may be more tolerant than any other democracy in the world.

In Germany, France, and Great Britain, respectable politicians can still make speeches characterizing certain ethnic groups in ways that are absolutely unacceptable in the United States. In those same countries, attacks upon immigrants and on mosques, synagogues and other structures associated with religious and ethnic minorities are a common occurrence. While similar attacks on buildings or individuals in the United Sates would be widely reported, little attention is given to these relatively frequent acts of intolerance in Europe.

The point is not that Europe is bad, but rather that Americans can feel very good about the tolerant society that we have created. It is not perfect by any means. Racial, religious and ethnic prejudices still exist. However, when compared to other open societies in the world, the United States has succeeded in creating an atmosphere in which immigrants, religious minorities, and others outside of the mainstream are not just tolerated, but also actively integrated into our society. This our students need to appreciate. This our teachers need to teach them.

Craig Kennedy is president of the German Marshall Fund of the United States.

A Basic Education for the Post-9/11 World

Andrew J. Rotherham

The past two years have shown the importance of ensuring that Americans understand their history and the broad contours of the world around them. For the overwhelming majority of Americans, public education is how we learn these things. That is why unity about some core purposes and content in public education is essential in our diverse and increasingly individualized society.

The September 11 attacks and the war in Iraq brought the question of content to a head, and heated debates rage about how and what to teach concerning these events. Yet 9/11 and Iraq are distinct issues. The relativism and "blame America" sentiment in the wake of 9/11 was largely based on ideology and preexisting positions rather than the facts and gravity of a major attack on our soil and way of life. The Iraq situation presents a more complicated set of issues, one in which reasonable people disagree about

Educators should not teach students what to think about al Qaeda, Iraq, or the next crisis, but rather give them information so they can intelligently think about it for themselves.

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the wisdom and efficacy of "preemptive" warfare as well as the magnitude of the threat the Hussein regime posed to the United States.

Talented teachers can always tailor lessons to reflect current events. But the fluidity of the current environment, coupled with bona fide disagreements about foreign policy and defense strategy, makes trying to develop model curricula to teach about these issues a Sysiphean task. A wiser and more manageable project for educators and schools is to tackle their students' generalized dearth of content-rich curriculum and effective teaching about civics, history, geography, and religion. Grounding the discussion in these subjects enables students to understand current issues in context. The role for educators is not to teach students what to think about al Qaeda, Iraq, or the next crisis, but rather to give them information so they can intelligently think about it for themselves.

We can start to do this by rethinking what we mean by curricular "basics" in today's world. These must come to include understanding the history and functioning of our democracy, a reasonable grasp of world history, and knowledge of the world's major religions. These are not new subjects, but they have taken on far greater importance in the post 9/11 world.

The Constitution, Bill of Rights, and Declaration can help children understand the foundations of our nation, its democratic traditions, and the guiding principles of its founders.

Crooner Sam Cooke is not the only American who doesn't know much about history. It is essential that students learn about the texts and ideas that helped launch our nation. These documents can be studied in differing depths depending on children's age and sophistication, but the Constitution, Bill of Rights, and Declaration of Independence can help youngsters of every age to understand the foundations of our nation, its democratic traditions, and the guiding principles of its founders. Too often, we teach only what these documents say and not why they are so important to the health of our nation and its ideals.

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Understanding these documents, the liberal traditions they embody, and the sweep of American history in which they play so large a role provides vital context when students study other parts of the world. Many of our cherished institutions and ideas—including popularly elected governments, a free press, and religious pluralism—do not exist in the nations that breed terrorism. And these institutions did not arise here and do not survive here by accident but, rather, through blood, sacrifice, and vigilance.

Good instruction in geography and world history is also essential to understanding the antecedents of today's challenges and the interconnectedness of today's world. The importance of teaching history is obvious; without it, how can one make heads or tails of geopolitical issues?

Similarly, at a time when only about one in three Americans has a passport and even fewer travel internationally, geography instruction must cut deeper than lines on a map, landmarks, and cuisine. Students must learn about the political, economic, and social environments in other countries, because these factors profoundly shape international issues.

Today it's impossible to make sense of current events without a basic understanding of the history of Islam and its major theological divisions. Learning about Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, and Buddhism also gives students a richer understanding of their world and the causes of some of its most virulent conflicts. Unfortunately, teaching about religion in schools is too often a casualty of the culture wars or unwarranted anxiety about what the First Amendment does and does not permit in public-school classrooms. That must be rectified. Beyond the nostrums of left and right, there is room to fashion a curriculum on this complex yet vital aspect of history.

All of these subjects are inherently political, but the stakes are too high to allow political considerations to block or distort their consideration. Just prior to the first anniversary of 9/11, for example, spurred by reporting in the *Washington Times*, allegedly anti-American curricular advice on the National Education Association's website became a *cause célèbre* among conservatives. Though the *Times's* account was misleading, the ensuing fracas obscured the deeper education problem: how lacking in serious content most of the proposed lessons were.

Content knowledge is the essential ingredient of real thinking and too often our emphasis on "teaching children how to think" fails to ensure that they have something to think about. When it comes to al Qaeda, Iraq, and future challenges, the failure to impart essential information and give students a framework for analyzing these issues means we imperil informed debate. That is a most unfortunate way to test Jefferson's notion that an informed citizenry is essential for a healthy democracy.

Andrew J. Rotherham is director of education policy at the Progressive Policy Institute.

The Choice We Face

Kay Hymowitz

The threats we face today are new but not unprecedented. Their historical resonance affirms the Founders' wisdom about the meaning of education in a democratic republic. The Founders

believed that education had the urgent purpose of turning the young into self-governing citizens, capable of taking charge not only of their own individual destiny but that of their country. Mass schooling would teach the young both to love freedom and to be "vigilant," in Jefferson's words, towards threats to its existence.

The Founders would not be surprised by our present, dangerous predicament. They believed that humans were prone to greed, ambition, and mass delusion and, consequently, that democracy would always be a fragile arrangement in need of proper care. Such care had to come from a properly educated citizenry who could understand their form of government enough to revere and protect it.

So how can educators prepare the next generation to grasp what is at stake in the new challenges their country faces?

Children cannot grow into reverent, discerning citizens if the history they learn is simply a parade of smallpox-infected Indians, oppressed slaves, and internment camps for Japanese-Americans.

They must first give children a serious introduction to their own form of government through the founding documents—the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Federalist Papers—that are essential to understanding the distinctively American idea. The Emancipation Proclamation, Gettysburg Address, and Washington's Farewell Address are also vital tools that can help students understand American principles. The "National Standards for Civics and Government" put out by the Center for Civic Education does a good job of explicating a number of the central themes that teachers should draw out from these documents: the nature of limited government and its relation to political and economic freedom, the meaning of shared powers, federalism, the important differences between our own system and a parliamentary or other constitutional democracies, and so forth.

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Students also have to understand that these documents are not mere parchment antiquities but a recipe for freedom—which brings us to the second essential ingredient for a rigorous education in American democracy: a solid grounding in American history, especially political history. Children need to see how Americans have wrestled with questions about the nation's role in the world and the balance between security and civil liberties in the past, much as they are forced to today. Indeed, these debates are inherent in the American project. For some time, educators have scorned political history as the actions of dead, white men and a meaningless retinue of names and dates, in favor of social and cultural history with their "creative" assignments like dioramas and diaries. But there is no getting around the fact that you can't exercise what Jefferson called "discernment" unless you know how American principles have played themselves out in the gritty world of politics.

Of course, children cannot grow into reverent, discerning citizens if the history they learn is simply a parade of smallpox-infected Indians, oppressed slaves, and internment camps for Japanese-Americans. The Salem witch trials, for example, are an enormously popular elementary school subject, in part because they provide an object lesson in American intolerance, and in part because they titillate immature minds just getting past fairy tales. Yet few students learn the lasting Puritan contribution to American politics—a commitment to universal literacy and the self-government inherent in the New England town meeting. In presenting history as a struggle to bring the American idea to life, teachers need not fear that they will fall prey to chauvinism or war mongering. Dissent, debate, and pluralism belong to the American tradition. The abolitionists, the Civil War, Vietnam, even the Revolutionary War: these stories can't be told *without* thinking critically. Moreover, a serious study of American political history should provide opportunities for students to debate the necessity of military conflict under diverse circumstances while at the same time elaborating war's immense human costs.

By now it should be clear that global history will often bring to light important differences between America, the West, and the rest of the world.

The third requirement of a serious preparation for American citizenship is world history. Children need to understand America's origins in Western civilization; after all, even the words citizen, freedom, and constitution stem from Greek and Latin. But Western history also teaches essential lessons about the nature of totalitarian ideologies that have challenged democracies in the past and, as we now know, will do so again. Students should also learn about the world's great religions, geography, cultural treasures, and diverse political systems. Sometimes they will see commonalities between foreign cultures and their own, as global studies teachers hope. But by now it should be clear that global history will often bring to light important differences between America, the West, and the rest of the world. Sometimes those differences will intrigue students and other times they will lead to a justifiable sense that, between cultures that flog women who go unveiled, conscript children, or discriminate against religious and ethnic groups and those who have struggled to fulfill a vision of rights for all, there is no choice.

In short, America's war on terror has made it essential that educators broaden the next generation's understanding of democracy, its origins and its momentous challenges—both past and future.

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From the Personal to the Political

William Damon

For the most part, American schoolchildren are exceptionally astute when it comes to matters of personal relations. They know a lot about themselves, their families, and their friends. No doubt their fine social awareness is related to how they spend their spare time—for the most part, interacting with family and friends or consuming mass media entertainment that focuses on the nuances of interpersonal situations (sitcoms, soaps, teen horror movies, rap songs, and so on). As active learners, contemporary children become extraordinarily sophisticated in small-scale human behavior far younger than previous, more sheltered, generations.

One thing that they learn very quickly is that they love "freedom." For the most part, what American children mean by "freedom" is the license to do and say what they want. Because their world is bounded by themselves and their immediate social relationships, this amounts to the liberty to resist demands by others for conformity in thought and deed. Many young people in America will go to the mat for the right to make their own value judgments, to enjoy their own music, to dress as they like, to spend their time and money as they wish, and to choose their own friends. In general, our culture supports the sense of personal autonomy that young people cherish.

For the most part, what American children mean by "freedom" is the license to do and say what they want.

Unfortunately, today's schoolchildren understand very little about the world beyond their own intimate circles of friends and family. Their ignorance most notably includes an almost complete lack of awareness about how rare their most prized possession, freedom, is in large parts of the world. Nor do they have much appreciation of what freedom means for a civic and political life that deals with matters more serious than recreational choices.

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Indeed, young people in our country know practically nothing about national or global politics, and they care even less. In normal times, this would be a grave problem for the future of civic life in our democracy; and by the end of the 20th century, social scientists and educators were beginning to express concern about the troublesome know-nothingism that had spread among the ranks of American youth. But now we no longer live in normal times. We are now at war, a war that may endure well into the maturity of today's students. It is our responsibility to prepare them for their engagement in it, and our schools need to participate in this charge. They must do a far better job of educating youngsters about the world beyond their own personal lives and pleasures.

Schools must help our children understand freedom on a national and global stage. As part of this understanding, students must learn why freedom always needs to be defended—to

understand the wisdom behind the maxim that eternal vigilance is the price we pay for our liberties. And our children must come to understand this in contemporary terms: the price of freedom in the world today; who threatens it; and what should we do, as U.S. citizens, to preserve and advance freedom in the world?

How can our schools impart this essential understanding? To begin with, they must abandon the well-intentioned but intellectually corrosive species of moral relativism that now infests public school curricula in the name of "multiculturalism." Schools must start teaching the plain truth about the world—namely that all cultures are not equally benign with respect to their support of individual freedom. And our schools must teach what life is like in places that do not honor freedom.

Social studies, which now emphasize tolerance for non-Western cultures and criticism of our own, must give students a sense of what the absence of freedom really means in some countries.

Social studies, which now emphasize tolerance for non-Western cultures and criticism of our own, must give students a living sense of what the absence of freedom really means in some parts of the world. Teach them about how writers feel in societies where the reward for writing a critical statement about the government is a death sentence. Teach them about how women feel in cultures that intentionally keep them illiterate and disenfranchised; force them to wear veils and other smothering clothes; punish them (rather than their attackers) when they are raped; and threaten them with harm as a means of extorting dowries from their families. Draw the contrast with societies where everyone gets to vote, protest, join unions, start businesses, worship or not as they wish, and (to bring the point home) even choose their own manner of dress and leisure pursuits.

Once students come to understand what is really at stake when freedom is won or lost, they must learn about the history of freedom, how it has grown in some places and slipped away in others, and why that happens. Teach them how American rights were forged through suffering at Valley Forge and Selma; how utopian Russian dreams vanished into tyranny; how a budding German democracy succumbed to terrorism and divisiveness in the Weimar years; how zealous, or corrupt, dictators in the Middle East have ruled their populations through fear, thuggery, and intimidation. History should be taught as a narrative of what has gone right and what has gone wrong along the road to liberty.

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In teaching history, balance is key. My daughter's high school U.S. history course relied on the highly critical *People's History of the United States* as a primary text. It did not offer a balanced approach. It's an acceptable part of the reading list, but it is too lopsided to be the main source of historical knowledge. I would place the terrible errors that this critical text highlights (e.g. the Tulsa race riots, the Indian massacres) in context of the self-corrections that they spawned; and I would point out that it is a rare and precious freedom to allow teachers to talk

with students about shortcomings of their own culture (compare, for example, with the education that students get in an Islamic *madrasa*). Students also need to learn about historical horrors in countries that have destroyed freedom—such as the Nazi pogroms, the Soviet purges, and the Cambodian killing fields. A balanced history course will give students such compelling reasons to care enough about our free society that they will eagerly defend it when it is threatened and work to correct it when it does not live up to its own high ideals.

If schools would encourage students to care about our society, this would be a crucial first step in getting them to take responsibility for it as engaged citizens. It would be a big step; but there is one more that is needed: to take responsibility for human freedom wherever it is in peril. John Dunne's *Meditation XVII*, with its famous line, "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main," should be compulsory reading for American school children. In our increasingly global existence, our students need to know that, in order to protect our own freedoms, we must work to ensure the freedoms of others. We must resist people who despise freedom wherever they are, and we must discredit the warped ideologies that feed their hatred. Our schools can play a key role in this by teaching students how our constitutional rights have secured our freedoms for generations, and how America throughout her history has successfully fought the threats of enslaving ideologies.

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How to Teach About Terrorism, Despotism, and Democracy

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Laying out what our children need to know about terrorism, tyranny, and democracy is a vital first step to reforming of history and civics education. But it remains for educators to translate those principles into practice in individual schools and classrooms. Thus, in the essays that follow, we raise the question of *how* one can successfully teach about terror, tyranny, and freedom.

Education should not, of course, encourage patriotism without reflection. But over the past several decades, it has become uncommon—even unacceptable—for teachers to assert that our form of democratic government is preferable to others, or to encourage serious discussion of the regimes that fail to protect basic human rights and assure their citizens a measure of individual freedom. The result of this soft relativism has been a widespread loss of civic nerve and plummeting historical literacy among our students, developments exposed to harsh view in the light of September 11.

The basis of true civic and historical education is knowledge—knowledge of the facts and dates and principles and key figures in American history and government.

The authors of the essays that follow, despite their different backgrounds and the varied topics they take up, all assume that the basis of true civic and historical education is *knowledge*—knowledge of the facts and dates and principles and key figures in American history and government. It is only upon the foundation of this knowledge that students can then begin to think critically about America and its role in world affairs—and about challenges to the American way of life. As former education secretary William J. Bennett says in the essay that opens this section, "Children must learn about America They must learn about the ideals upon which she was founded and toward which she has striven to grow and improve."

Senator Lamar Alexander and Bill Galston continue the discussion with questions that teachers should pose to their pupils and timeless truths that they should help their students come to understand, while Katherine Kerstern calls for students and teachers to get back to first principles through "a special study of the history of Western civilization."

Jeff Mirel recalls for us the legacy of a progressive and patriotic educator who challenged schools to create a common civic culture through teaching and learning. George Counts, the educator whose writings Mirel explicates, was not worried about adults "imposing" notions on children through education; to Counts, the "vital question is not 'Should we impose?' but rather '*What* should we impose, and *how* should we do it?'" Veteran teacher Erich Martel gives us real-life examples of how teachers can instruct about controversial events and encourage the acquisition of knowledge in a way that places the stress on knowledge and documentation, not opinion.

Mary Beth Klee is concerned with how schools ought to mark the anniversary of September 11. And historian Sheldon Stern and social studies educator Lucien Ellington, correctly assuming that one must understand past failings in order to do better in the future, explicate some of the failed curricular and pedagogical approaches that have worsened the decline of historical literacy and civic engagement among our children.

Seizing This Teachable Moment

William J. Bennett

September 11, 2001 was a catastrophic day in our history. But its aftermath became a chapter in the newest lesson about America's character. As Americans are wont to do, many tried to bring some good out of 9/11. For many teachers, that meant using the first anniversary to teach children lessons that needed to be learned, including some that many adults had forgotten.

A second set of lessons was added when we waged war against aggressive tyranny in Afghanistan and Iraq. War is a terrible thing, but it, too, teaches things about who we are: the way our country conducts itself in war, as well as the reasons *why* we go to war, are as significant as the ways we carry ourselves in peace.

War and violence are always regrettable but sometimes necessary.

In the wake of the slaughter that took place two years ago, America was handed a unique opportunity to educate children in this country—and elsewhere—about the meanings and methods of democracy, the very meanings that inspire the wrath of our enemies who hate how we do things as much as our purposes for doing them.

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As I write this, children in Iraq are seeing the hand of democracy at work for the first time. We are rebuilding schools and cities, re-opening schools and restoring justice. The pinnacle of reconstruction in Iraq will be the establishment of a government of, by, and for the Iraqi people. But it took our liberation—with military might—to actually begin this process.

Benjamin Franklin wrote something that is in much use by anti-war protestors these days: "There never was a good war or a bad peace." Franklin was a great man, and instrumental in our nation's founding. Seven years before he wrote that sentence, he signed one of the most important documents in American history, perhaps in world history: the Declaration of Independence. And we need to remember, and teach, that not only did the Declaration found

our nation upon an idea of liberty wedded to equality before the law, it did so—as the signatories well knew—with the risk of war, violence, and death. For the sake of equality and liberty, our nation's founders, including Franklin, pledged their "Lives . . . Fortunes and . . . sacred Honor." They knew the risks of war, but they also knew the dangers of a fictitious peace—the kind that would be kept only by submitting to a tyrant. As a result of our War of Independence, the yoke of British tyranny was lifted from our necks and our democracy was born. We, as a young nation, learned that some forms of "peace" are worse than a just war.

War and violence are always regrettable but sometimes necessary. There is no honor in remaining idle, or simply watching, as a family member, or indeed as any human being, has violence done to him. We did not allow King George to continue to reign over us; we declared our independence and took up arms based on the self-evident truths that all humans are created equal and endowed with certain unalienable rights. In World War II, of the three Axis powers we took arms against, only Japan had first struck at our homeland. But it is beyond debate that our taking up arms to defeat all three enemies of liberty made those countries better. Japan, Germany, and Italy are all now thriving democracies. Their people are better off, we are better off, and the world is better off—not because of *their* leaders in World War II, but because of *ours*.

The same lessons of democracy that we seek to export for the good of all people must be explicitly taught to American students at home.

After being attacked two years ago by terrorists who were financed and harbored by terrorist-supporting states, we are engaged in military efforts to end the regimes of those states—and, in the process, ending terror, securing our nation, and improving the conditions of life for those in those states. As we did to the Axis in World War II, we will do to the evil, terror-sponsoring states in this war. And the blessings of liberty will spread.

Children born in America are so accustomed to those blessings that they may not recognize them. The same lessons of democracy that we seek to export for the good of all people must be explicitly taught to American students at home. To fail to do so is to cheat our children, and the immigrants who come to live here, of their birthright.

Children must learn about America. They must learn about the ideals upon which she was founded and toward which she has striven to grow and improve. They ought to learn about the figures, past and present, who led America in times of war and peace. They ought to learn about the good that America has done around the world and the unparalleled freedoms, opportunities, and blessings for those who live here today.

Children must also learn about right and wrong. For too long, so-called sophisticates have said that right and wrong and good and evil are matters of opinion, of personal preference, of one's own taste. On September 11, however, we saw the face and felt the hand of evil. Hijacking

planes full of innocent citizens and crashing them into buildings filled with more innocent civilians is, plainly and simply, evil. To call it anything else is to trivialize what happened. And in the face of what happened, those who argue that there is no such thing as evil are revealed as what they were all along—fools. Their intellectual dishonesty has done our nation grave harm—but not irreparable harm. Teachers must be willing to say that there are moral absolutes. (I discuss this and the previous topic in my recent book *Why We Fight: Moral Clarity and the War on Terrorism.*)

On September 11, heroism and bravery were perfectly illustrated by the firefighters who ascended the Twin Towers while others tried to escape. Those who volunteer for our military, and for the service of protecting their country while liberating others, are heroes and their example needs to be taught as well. Heroism was also taught by those not in traditional uniforms. The passengers on Flight 93 who rose up and prevented a hijacked plane from crashing into Washington were seemingly ordinary businessmen whose uniforms were suits, coats, and ties. The heroes of Flight 93 taught us an invaluable lesson: every American can be called to heroism if he recognizes the moment he lives in, the moment that is thrust upon him.

The second anniversary of the darkest day in our recent history will, of course, be a day of remembrance. That is to the good, for we must never forget what happened that day. Teachers have a unique and important role to play in making sure that children learn the right lessons from it. Those lessons—lessons of courage, duty, heroism, and right action—are timeless. They should not be forgotten, and neither should the history of the country that teaches the world those lessons so well.

William J. Bennett, former U.S. Secretary of Education, is founder of K12, an Internet-based education company, and chairman of Americans for Victory Over Terrorism.

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Seven Questions About September 11

Lamar Alexander

During my Senate campaign last year, I listened carefully, as politicians do, for the words that seemed to resonate most with my audiences. To my surprise, I found there was just one sentence I could not finish before every audience interrupted me by breaking into applause: "It is time to put the teaching of American history and civics back in its rightful place in our schools so our children grow up learning what it means to be an American."

The terrorists who attacked us on 9/11 weren't just lashing out at buildings and people—they were attacking who we are as Americans. Most Americans recognize this, and that's why there has been a national hunger for leadership and discussion about our values. Parents know that our children are not being taught our common culture and shared values. National tests show that three-quarters of the nation's fourth, eighth, and twelfth graders are not proficient in civics knowledge, and one-third do not even have basic knowledge, making them civic illiterates.

Parents know that our children are not being taught our common culture and shared values, and there has been a national hunger for leadership and discussion about those values.

That's why I made American history and civics the subject of my maiden speech and first piece of legislation in the United States Senate. By a vote of 90-0, the Senate passed my bill to create summer residential academies for outstanding teachers and students of American history and civics. Their purpose is to inspire better teaching and more learning of the key events, key persons, key ideas, and key documents that shaped the institutions and democratic heritage of the United States.

So if I were teaching about September 11, these are some of the issues I would ask my students to consider:

• *Is 9/11 the worst thing to happen to the United States?* The answer, of course, is no, but I'm surprised by the number of people who say yes. It saddens me to realize that those who make such statements were never properly taught the history of our country. Many doubted America would win the Revolutionary War. The British sacked Washington and burned the White House to the ground in the War of 1812. In the Civil War, we lost more Americans than in any other conflict, as brother fought against brother. The list goes on. Children should know why we made those sacrifices and fought for the values that make us exceptional.

• *What makes America exceptional?* I began the first session of a course I taught at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government by making a list of 100 ways America is different than other countries—not always better, but unique. America's exceptionalism has been a source of fascination since Tocqueville's trip across America in 1830, where he met Davy Crockett and Jim Bowie on the Mississippi River. His book, *Democracy in America*, is still the best description of America's unique ideals in action. Another outstanding text is *American Exceptionalism* by Seymour Martin Lipset.

• *Why is it you can't become Japanese or French, but you must become an American?* If I were to emigrate to Japan, I could not become Japanese; I would always be an American living in Japan. But if a Japanese citizen came here, he could become an American, and we would welcome him with open arms. Why? Because our identity is based not on ethnicity but on a

creed of ideas and values in which most Americans believe. Historian Richard Hofstadter wrote, "It is our fate as a nation not to have ideologies, but to be one." To become American citizens, immigrants must take a test demonstrating their knowledge of American history and civics.

◦ *What are the principles that unite us as Americans?* In Thanksgiving remarks after the September 11 attacks, President Bush praised our nation's response to terror. "I call it the American character," he said. Former Vice President Al Gore, in a speech after the attacks, said, "We should fight for the values that bind us together as a country." In my Harvard course we put together a list of some of those values: liberty, *e pluribus unum*, equal opportunity, individualism, rule of law, free exercise of religion, separation of church and state, *laissez faire*, and a belief in progress.

◦ *If we agree on these principles, why is there so much division in our politics?* Just because we agree on these values doesn't mean that we agree on their application. Most of our politics is about the hard work of applying these principles to our everyday lives. When we do, they often conflict. For example, when discussing President Bush's proposal to let the federal government fund faith-based charities, we know that "In God We Trust," but we also know that we don't trust government with God. When considering whether the federal government should pay for scholarships that middle- and low-income families might use at any accredited school—public, private, or religious—some object that the principle of equal opportunity can conflict with the separation of church and state.

It's quite a weighty thing to "absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty."

• *What does it mean to you to be an American?* After 9/11, I proposed an idea I call "Pledge Plus Three." Why not start each school day with the Pledge of Allegiance—as many schools still do—followed by a teacher or student sharing for three minutes "what it means to be an American"? Some of the newest American students will probably be some of the best speakers. I found in teaching my Harvard class that the student who best understood American identity was from the Ukraine.

• *Ask students to stand, raise their right hand, and recite the Oath of Allegiance, just as immigrants do when they become American citizens.* I did this at a speech I gave recently on my American history and civics bill. It's quite a weighty thing to "absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty" and to agree to "bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by the law."

Our history is the struggle to live up to the ideals that have united us and defined us from the very beginning, the principles of the American Character. If that is what students are

taught about 9/11, they will not only become better informed. They will strengthen our country for generations to come.

Lamar Alexander, a U.S. Senator from Tennessee, is a former U.S. Secretary of Education.

Teaching Controversial Current Events

Erich Martel

In the weeks immediately after 9/11, when the world was waiting for the President's military response to begin, I surveyed my students' views. I asked how many would have voted for President Bush in 2000. Fewer than 20 percent would have, an accurate reflection of party loyalties in Washington, D.C., where I teach. However, when asked whether they supported a military response to the terrorist attacks, more than three out of four did—powerful testimony to the broad public consensus that those searing moments had forged. The President didn't need to build a case; he only needed to provide the leadership.

The events leading to the war in Iraq produced no 9/11-type consensus. Many students in my school joined public protests, and over 80 percent expressed opposition to the war.

The terrorists' blind hatred of America and the sense of purpose in the President's widely supported response offered a vision of "*e pluribus unum*" that fanatics abroad and ideologues at home never notice.

The victims of 9/11 included nationals and immigrants from over 50 countries, from all religions, cultures, ethnicities, hues, and orientations. Yet this infinity of labels, so important to us, was, in fanatical eyes, but a single American face. On that day, one didn't have to be American to be an American! In that baptism of fire and dust, race and place had but one human face: the "attack on America" was, in a uniquely American sense, an "attack upon the world."

Among all the acts of courage that fiery day, the last reported moments on Flight 93 captivated me most. They testified to the nature of our "one [American] face" and recalled for me the selfless acts of the four chaplains (a priest, a rabbi, and two Protestant ministers) during World War II, when their troop ship, the USAT Dorchester, was torpedoed in the frigid North

Atlantic. When the supply of life vests ran out on the rapidly sinking ship, they "removed their own vests and passed the chance for life to the frightened young soldiers. None of them first inquired, 'What religion are you?'"

By contrast, the events leading to the war in Iraq produced no 9/11-type consensus. Many students in my school joined public protests, and, in a student government poll, over 80 percent expressed opposition to the war. The students' pre-war protests resembled pre-war opposition to World War. In both cases, instead of a mutually witnessed public moment to document the need for war, that decision rested on interpretations of necessity and heated public debate.

As teachers, it is our duty to provide students with the basic geographic, historical, and cultural background for understanding complex world events and the reasons why America abandoned its traditional policy of isolationism and took on greater global commitments after World War II. Without that background students can't understand the nature of terrorism or the logic behind America's role in these uncertain conflicts and in the broader global war on terror. With that background, students will be able to intelligently evaluate such questions as whether commitment in Iraq may become as unpopular as Vietnam was and whether the war against terrorism will be successful.

As educators, we must accept this challenge and offer students models for evaluating controversial events. At all costs, we must avoid preaching and attempting to impose our own "politically correct" or "patriotically correct" views on students. An outside observer who knew little of the events that preceded 9/11 and the Iraq War might have speculated that my students' shift from a pro-war to an anti-war position in the space of one year was the result of my prodding. Yet while we discussed these events and historical precedents and analogies, there was no prodding. When historically incorrect statements were made, I would correct them. I would help them structure their questions so that they could find the answers they sought. When conflicting interpretations were offered, I would help them see which ones met the important test of explaining all known evidence.

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When students asked me recently whether I supported the War in Iraq, I asked them to first tell me what they thought my views were. Some thought I supported it; some thought I opposed it; others said they just didn't know. All were glad that they had the opportunity to discuss these events in a manner where the touchstone of legitimacy was in documentation and knowledge, not in their teacher's opinions. That's the way it should be.

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What Is "Education for Democracy"?

Katherine Kersten

Our children are living in perilous times. To prepare them to preserve their heritage of freedom in this dangerous world, we must place education aimed at cultivating democratic citizenship at the heart of the school curriculum.

Education for democratic citizenship has two central components. First, our young people should come to understand—and embrace—the principles of liberty, equality, and justice upon which this nation was founded. They should learn about the institutions that make self-government possible, and become acquainted with democracy's unique historical roots. Second, they should develop the qualities of character that mark true citizens: courage, loyalty, responsibility, gratitude to forebears, and a self-sacrificing devotion to the common good. As democratic citizens, they must have a capacity for judgment, an ability to discern their duty, and a love for—and desire to perpetuate—the republic.

America's story has two major themes: principles and people. Our challenge is to bring both to life for students.

The heart of civic education is the study of American history and government. In recent decades, however, our schools have fallen woefully short in these areas, as evidenced by the abysmal results from the 2001 National Assessment of Educational Progress, on which more students scored "below basic" in American history than any other subject.

A glance at the textbooks that dominate U.S. history and government classrooms suggests why. Today's standard texts are dry, lacking in detail, monotonous, and politically tendentious. Such books could never inspire students to cherish their heritage of freedom. To foster democratic citizenship, we must fundamentally change the way our schools teach history and government. We must work to tell America's dramatic story in a way that engages young people's imagination, excites their gratitude, and reveals what is at stake in the American experiment.

America's story has two major themes: principles and people. Our challenge is to bring both to life for students. In teaching principles, we should make liberal use of original documents, as well as the stirring rhetoric of the Revolutionary and Civil War eras. The Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Federalist Papers, the great speeches of Washington, Patrick Henry, and Lincoln—all eloquently capture the essence of the American creed of liberty and equality, of majority rule and minority rights.

As students study these documents, they should dissect and debate the fundamental ideas from which our nation's political vision springs. On the subject of natural rights, for example,

they could read not just Lincoln, but also Stephen Douglas; not just Frederick Douglass, but also John C. Calhoun. By exploring the assumptions and implications of these competing interpretations, students are likely to develop a reasoned allegiance to the principles that define our common life.

In addition to learning America's founding principles, students need to know our nation's history. By studying political history, they will discover how their forebears translated democratic ideas into institutions and practices. To grasp America's future possibilities, they must learn about the great statesmen, lawgivers, explorers, military heroes, inventors, economic innovators, and social crusaders whose decisions and actions have given our nation its shape.

Our young people need to know where else in the world self-government has taken root, and why—and where it has not, and why.

A central part of America's story is its status as a nation of immigrants. For generations, the world's "tired and poor" have streamed here to take advantage of our extraordinary economic freedom and opportunity. Yet few contemporary students understand or value this aspect of their heritage. To rectify that situation, education for democratic citizenship should include the stories of immigrants like Elie Wiesel, Frank Capra, and Jaime Escalante, who endured great hardships to live the American dream.

A curriculum that centers on America's founding principles and history will lay the groundwork for democratic citizenship. But students need a broader context for informed decision-making: They must understand the place of America's experiment in ordered liberty in the larger world. Our young people need to know where else in the world self-government has taken root, and why—and where it has not, and why. They must be familiar with the various systems of government and social organization that compete with liberal democracy. Finally, they must study democracy's enemies and analyze its vulnerabilities. (An eloquent guide here is "Education for Democracy," a statement—with accompanying curricular guidelines—issued in 1987 by the American Federation of Teachers, the Educational Excellence Network, and Freedom House in conjunction with the bicentennial of the Constitution.)

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This means, first, that our students must make a special study of the history of Western civilization. The West gave birth to representative government and the unique ideas that undergird it, including natural rights, freedom of conscience, and the rule of law. In addition, students must become familiar with the history, geography, and political systems of other areas—today, most urgently, the Middle East—whose societies have not been receptive to democracy.

Finally, our young people need to understand the ideas and forces that threaten democracy and the potential costs of defending or extending freedom. By studying World War II and America's nearly 50-year Cold War with Communism, they can learn much about the policies

that are likely to strengthen democracy, and those that are likely to undermine it. Likewise, by examining America's post-war nation building efforts in Japan and Germany, the Marshall Plan in Europe, and our effort to contain Communism through the Vietnam War, they can assess the benefits and risks of attempts to spread freedom and prosperity to other lands.

Informed citizens need to be knowledgeable on all these subjects. In the end, however, teaching young people to be good citizens requires more than conveying knowledge. It also requires encouraging the cultivation of certain traits of character. In a word, it requires what the ancient Greeks called a *paragon*, or character ideal.

Many students today have difficulty distinguishing between a celebrity and a hero. We can help them to discern that all-important difference by acquainting them with champions of democracy and inspiring them to say, "I want to be like that."

To that end, our students need to hear the heroic stories of George Washington at Valley Forge and Nathan Hale's last words. They should also hear the voices of ordinary Americans, like Union soldier Sullivan Ballou, who wrote movingly to his wife before the Battle of Bull Run about his love of country. Novels and stories are another powerful vehicle for conveying the virtues of the citizen and patriot. My own children have thrilled to *Johnny Tremain*, and I still remember how moved I was at reading Edward Everett Hale's "The Man Without a Country" in ninth grade.

Our task as educators is to help young people see that America is worthy of their love and to help them become worthy of their heritage as American citizens.

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Six Truths About America

William Galston

Question: What should teachers teach their students about September 11 and the momentous events flowing from it?

My answer: Some of the most important truths about American civic life.

First. There is such a thing as civic virtue, and whether or not citizens possess it can be a matter of life and death. The memory of police, firefighters, and random civilians doing their duty (and more) in the face of overwhelming danger is as indelible as are the images of the collapsing World Trade Center and the maimed Pentagon. The stunning live pictures of our troops fighting in Iraq showed us how much rests on the discipline and dedication of our armed forces, many of whom are barely out of high school.

Because civic virtue is not innate but must be learned, we must pay careful attention to the processes—institutional and informal—through which it is cultivated. Public schools have an important role to play in encouraging thoughtful citizenship, not only in civics classes but also through student government and extra-curricular activities that teach young people how to organize groups and work together toward shared goals.

Because civic virtue is not innate but must be learned, we must pay careful attention to the processes—institutional and informal—through which it is cultivated.

We must ask ourselves whether civic virtue is something that can be delegated to others, so that some act while the rest of us watch, or whether it requires engagement from everyone. We cannot all fight fires, or foreign foes. But we can all pay attention to public affairs, vote, serve on juries, and discharge the modest obligations our country asks of us in return for the blessings of American citizenship.

Second. From its inception, our country has been nourished by flows of immigrants from many nations; never more so than during the past four decades, when our population has been enriched by new citizens from every corner of the globe, representing an astonishing range of cultures and religions. For all the talk of our increasing diversity, we have learned once again that Americans possess a civic identity that both includes and surmounts our differences. The attack of September 11 was an assault on all Americans, without regard to their race, creed, or national origin, and we responded to it as one nation. We watched together, mourned together, gained strength and resolve from one another.

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Our armed forces reflect the diversity of our population, but they also offer a model of how these differences can be incorporated into shared standards and common purposes. Our task in the years ahead is to ensure that our society as a whole matches the stunning level of social integration that our military has achieved.

Third. Even in a democracy that mistrusts politics and abjures concentrated power, leadership matters. The President's exemplary conduct in the first dreadful weeks after September 11 helped rally us to a sense of mission and significance. The core of democratic leadership, we learned once again, is public discourse that makes clear the principles for which we act and responsibly declares the facts that should guide our judgment about what we must do together.

In this context, it is especially damaging when doubts are raised about facts asserted by our leaders. The failure to find Iraqi weapons of mass destruction in the months immediately after the end of major conflict in Iraq—and the subsequent doubts raised about the veracity of the evidence the President presented in the State of the Union address in the run-up to the war—weakened people's confidence that they had been told the unvarnished truth about the threats our country faced. The maintenance of the public's trust is essential, especially in matters of life and death.

In a democracy, moreover, the basic premises of public policy should always be open for candid discussion, and no one should claim a monopoly on patriotism. Americans of good will disagree about the war in Iraq and about President Bush's decision that actions to preempt and prevent future attacks would henceforth be more central to America's national defense strategy. Democratic debate should always be robust, but it should never be embittered by charges that legitimate dissent is unpatriotic.

For all the talk of our increasing diversity, we have learned once again that Americans possess a civic identity that both includes and surmounts our differences.

Fourth. In the face of danger, it is hard to keep our balance and safeguard essential liberties. In the weeks after September 11, the President's leadership helped put a lid on what might otherwise have been escalating attacks on Arab and Muslim Americans. At the same time, new laws requested by the administration and enacted by the Congress have granted the government emergency powers that could lead to unwarranted infringements of freedom if not carefully monitored. Many Americans have been troubled by the lengthy detention of hundreds of individuals without formal charges or access to lawyers, and by the incarceration of captured combatants in circumstances that some believe are inconsistent with international law.

It remains to be seen whether history will judge these measures as harshly as it does the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II. But the possibility is sobering, and it is in no way unpatriotic for citizens to pose such questions. The venerable maxim that eternal vigilance is the price of liberty is as true today as ever before.

Fifth. The relation between religion and politics in the United States, though hardly uncontested, is a hard-won accomplishment of great worth. We have managed to avoid the Scylla of state secularism and the Charybdis of theocracy while fostering an astonishing variety and vitality of religious faith and observance.

Nonetheless, there are groups in the world with very different ideas about the proper relation between religion and politics, and we must ask ourselves whether what we take for granted should serve as the single model for all nations. This question will become especially pressing as we create opportunities for the people of Iraq to frame new political institutions for their

country, because many Iraqis believe that their religion should have more of an official role than is consistent with American constitutional principles.

Sixth. Whether we like it or not, our country is enmeshed in the world beyond our borders. As the world's most powerful nation, our actions inevitably affect everyone else. We are disliked in some quarters because of the principles we espouse, the policies we pursue, and the friends we support.

We must accept the burden of protecting ourselves and our friends against the enemies we cannot help making. At the same time, as the authors of the Declaration of Independence understood well, it is important to have a decent respect for the opinions of mankind. This means not only candidly stating the reasons that impel us to act, but also paying attention to the views of nations that disagree with us. This is especially important when, as is often the case, the ends we pursue depend on the cooperation of other nations, including those that disagree with us.

The relation between religion and politics in the United States, though hardly uncontested, is a hard-won accomplishment of great worth.

For example, as it becomes clear that the occupation of Iraq will require significant numbers of troops for years rather than months, the drain on the U.S. military and treasury is increasing. Persuading those of our allies who disagreed with us about the war to share the burden of building a durable democratic peace is important and cannot be done without some measure of patience, humility, and mutual forbearance.

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Defending Democracy

Jeffrey Mirel

Immediately following the terror attacks of September 11, commentators frequently invoked Pearl Harbor to describe the shock and horror of the day. Unlike September 11, 2001, however, by December 7, 1941 many American educators had already realized that our democratic way of life was in peril and that they had to play a major role in its defense. For example, in May 1941, the Educational Policies Commission of the National Education Association published a short book by George S. Counts, a professor at Columbia University's Teachers College, explaining how educators could prepare for that role. While some aspects of Counts' earlier work had been quite controversial, this book was designed to rally the nation behind its most widely-shared ideals and values. Entitled *The Education of Free Men in American Democracy*, Counts's book powerfully and eloquently explained what American democracy is, why it is so precious, and how it must be defended. It should be required reading for all American educators today.

Today, many American educators are extremely reticent about vigorously promoting the democratic ideas, values, and behaviors that Counts and others in his generation took for granted.

Early in the book, Counts described the situation then facing the United States. Written more than 60 years ago, his words are remarkably fitting for the present:

> Today the threat to democracy comes from a barbaric banditry, marked by cynical duplicity and outrageous violation of the ordinary rules of human decency. . . . This new threat to freedom comes from ruthless men of force who care nothing for civil liberties and who mock at all appeals to humanity.

Counts argued that threats to democracy are as much intellectual as they are military and economic. Thus, he put educators on the front lines in the battle for the hearts and minds of the young. To win this struggle, he said, educators must understand and clearly articulate democratic ideals to their students.

But in urging teachers to undertake a similar effort today, we must confront the troubling differences between now and 1941. Today, many American educators are extremely reticent about vigorously promoting the democratic ideas, values, and behaviors that Counts and others in his generation took for granted. For example, the lessons and units that the National Education Association designed for use in dealing with the September 11 attacks avoided force-

ful statements about the superiority of democracy to other forms of government or the need for Americans to rise to the defense of our democratic way of life.

There are many reasons for this reticence, but certainly one of the most prominent is the fear that declarations about, for example, the superiority of democracy amount to little more than indoctrination and serve as a form of adult imposition that teachers should shun as inherently undemocratic.

Here again, it is worth turning to Counts for guidance. Nine years before he wrote *The Education of Free Men in American Democracy*, Counts became probably the most famous educational leader in the United States due to a speech he gave to the Progressive Education Association, later published as *Dare the Schools Build a New Social Order?* This speech, which was a fiery indictment of the failures of *laissez-faire* capitalism, called on teachers to lead the way towards a fairer, more just society. In urging educators to take this action, Counts dismissed teachers' fears about indoctrination and imposition by arguing that all education—even the most child-centered and non-directive pedagogy—retained strong elements of indoctrination and imposition. Because educators cannot avoid imposing adult ideas, values, and behaviors on children, the vital question is not "Should we impose?" but rather "*What* should we impose, and *how* should we do it?"

Educators cannot avoid imposing adult ideas, values, and behaviors on children. So the vital question is not "Should we impose?" but rather "What should we impose, and how should we do it?"

With regard to the attacks of September 11 and the ongoing war on terrorism, we must begin answering the "what" part of these questions by urging teachers to affirm boldly to their students that some things are indeed better than others. Democracy is a better form of government than totalitarianism, regardless of whether totalitarian regimes provide greater national security, make the trains run on time, or inspire spiritual and moral purity. Religious pluralism is better than religious intolerance, regardless of whether that intolerance is rooted in ancient religious doctrine or wrapped in modern nationalistic rhetoric. A society in which women have equal rights is better than one in which women are oppressed, regardless of how deeply intertwined such oppression might be with the culture that sustains it. People who abhor and resist violence targeted at innocent civilians are better than those who proclaim that such terror is justified, regardless of the putative righteousness of their cause.

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These statements are so rooted in basic democratic ideals that the vast majority of Americans and, indeed, the vast majority of American teachers undoubtedly view them as self-evident truths. Thus, the challenge before us is not to convince teachers that they should embrace these ideas, but rather to help teachers deepen their understanding of them, enhance

teachers' content knowledge to make their pedagogy about democratic ideas more effective, and support teachers' efforts to make instruction in these ideas an explicit and regular aspect of their classrooms.

The beauty of *The Education of Free Men in a Democracy* is that Counts provides a thoughtful and comprehensive vision of how teachers should carry out that mission. He begins with a detailed exposition of the philosophical underpinnings of democratic thought and a clear explanation of the fundamental differences between democracy and totalitarianism. He argues that teachers' knowledge must be grounded in the great, liberal tradition of the West, bolstered by the findings of modern social science. Essential to such education is substantial knowledge of such disciplines as economics, sociology, and international relations. Above all, Counts believed, teachers had to provide their students with an in-depth understanding of history, particularly what he described as "*the long struggle to liberate the human mind and to civilize the human heart*" (emphasis in the original). His goal was to fashion an approach to democratic education that would fulfill the promise of democratic life. He declared that, "A democracy should guarantee to the members of each new generation the knowledge, the insights, and the understandings that will give them power to make them masters of the state and their rulers."

Counts believed that teachers had to provide their students with what he described as "the long struggle to liberate the human mind and to civilize the human heart."

Such education demands more than just having students learn the details of the "long struggle to liberate the human mind and to civilize the human heart," though certainly this is the essential place to start. Embedded in that process is teaching students the value of skepticism; mastery of the intellectual skills necessary to analyze and use evidence in working toward a conclusion; and the ability to identify, assess, and evaluate competing interpretations. Students must learn how to recognize and use both reason and emotion in crafting persuasive arguments and engaging in deliberative, civil debate with others who might strongly disagree with them. This instruction demands that students realize the importance of using these skills regularly, because they are among the core building blocks of democratic thought and vital to taking a democratic stance in the world.

This is difficult work. It focuses on teachers deliberately shaping the intellectual dispositions and tools that students must acquire. In doing so, teachers must again confront the indoctrination question, but now with an interesting twist. Ironically, to help students acquire the knowledge and understandings that will give them power—indeed, enable them to exercise responsible freedom—teachers must intentionally and effectively impose upon them an education that encourages democratic thinking.

Six decades ago, George Counts urged educators to teach our young people that democracy had to be defended abroad, by force if necessary, and expanded at home by strengthening the quality and effectiveness of our educational and political institutions. He balanced his passionate defense of American democracy with the recognition that neither equality nor justice for all Americans had yet been realized. But his passion for democracy rested on the belief that our form of government provided the only way by which equal rights and justice might truly be achieved. His ideas are as relevant today as in 1941. In the face of a rising totalitarian threat, modern American educators must teach these lessons once again to a new generation of students.

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What Schools Should Do on September 11

Mary Beth Klee

On the second anniversary of September 11, what should schools and teachers do? Get on with their primary civic responsibility and teach. After the Pledge of Allegiance, a moment of silence to honor those who died, and perhaps a story of the heroic firefighters and policemen of that day, teachers ought to begin helping students climb the mighty mountains of reading, math, science, geography, and history.

History is of particular importance. Most U.S. schools do not teach world and American history consistently or well. September 11 shows why we must. The understanding required to make sense of that horrific day with its lessons about freedom and tolerance is not found in a single "September Eleventh Lesson Plan." It is found in the annals of the past and in an organized program of study.

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Students should learn of the nation's roots as a haven for many faiths and beliefs, instances of colonial intolerance, and the triumph of tolerance with the disestablishment of religion.

In an organized U.S. history program, for example, students would learn of the nation's roots as a haven for those of many faiths and beliefs, instances of colonial intolerance, and the triumph of tolerance with the disestablishment of religion. They would learn about America's maverick path in 1776, declaring independence and establishing a republican

government, our struggle for a workable constitutional democracy, and our subsequent internal fights to live up to our own ideals in, for example, the Civil War and the civil rights movements. They would learn how Americans have reacted in times past to attacks from without—about the nation's bold mobilization after Pearl Harbor and its key role in defeating fascism. They would also learn about the nation's failings, such as the internment of Japanese Americans. They would learn that American history has not all been sweetness and light, but that we judge our own history by the ideal that "all men are created equal" and the hope that we stand for "liberty and justice for all."

In an organized world history program, students would learn about the origins of Islam, its spread, its cultural dominance in the Middle Ages and Renaissance, its tradition of tolerance, and its historic championship of the arts and learning. They would also learn about its potential for *jihad* and violence—a potential that has been as significant a part of its history as tolerance and learning. They would learn about the demise of the last great Muslim empire at the end of World War I, and the ongoing struggle in the Middle East and Asia Minor to make the transition from a faith that governs and dictates (like Christianity at the end of the Middle Ages) to one that leads by example and inspires by its fruits. September 11 represents the collision of these two worlds.

America's schools have much to teach. On September 11, let them be about that honorable task. That's civic lesson enough.

Mary Beth Klee, an author and education consultant, is the founder of Crossroads Academy, a Core Knowledge elementary and middle school.

How to Stop Worrying and Learn to Love American Exceptionalism

Sheldon M. Stern

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In 2002, in the new post-September 11 environment, and likely in response to public criticism of its 1998 Essential Academic Learning Requirements in social studies, Washington State issued new K-12 social studies frameworks. Parents in Washington had reason to expect that the state named for the most important individual in the American Revolution and in the creation of the U.S. constitutional system would offer their children an intellectually challenging, inclusive, and balanced national history—one that would provide these students with the knowledge they need to understand and preserve their freedom.

No such luck! Benchmarks in Washington's fifth and eleventh grade frameworks instruct students to criticize (without any consideration of the larger context) "the inconsistencies stated in the Declaration of Independence and the conditions of the time (e.g., slavery, women [sic] rights)"; to "Analyze the reasons the United States is an imperialist nation"; and to "Explain reasons that African American pride and militancy replaced assimilation and accommodation of an earlier age."

Instead of trying to eliminate old historical distortions (the exclusion or trivialization of women, blacks, and other minorities), social studies education typically replaces these old distortions with new ones. In classrooms all over America, the struggle to include those previously excluded has frequently produced an equal and opposite reaction, much like Newton's Third Law, requiring the exclusion of those previously included. As just one example, George Washington's name, astonishingly enough, never appears in the Washington State social studies requirements for "essential" learning or in the state's recent curriculum frameworks. Not surprisingly, students today can often identify Sacajawea and Harriet Tubman, but can barely discuss Washington or Jefferson—except, of course, as slave owners.

George Washington's name, astonishingly enough, never appears in the Washington State social studies requirements for "essential" learning or in the state's recent curriculum frameworks.

Social studies gurus have little patience for historical ambiguity and complexity—that is, for real historical knowledge. Jefferson did write ardently about freedom while living off the forced labor of hundreds of slaves. As a result, students are often encouraged to accuse him of hypocrisy and to ask the wrong question: how could a man who owned slaves presume to write about freedom? The right *historical* question is: How could a man born and raised in a slave society and in a world in which slavery was the accepted norm become a passionate advocate of the radical ideas of democracy and freedom? Jefferson, in fact, helped to articulate a concept of liberty that would contribute to changes that would ultimately destroy slavery itself and extend citizenship beyond anything imaginable in his time. In that sense, despite the fact that he owned slaves, Jefferson transcended the limitations of his world. As social and political analyst Roger Wilkins recently wrote:

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> America is often said to be a country founded on ideas: But if you examine that cluster of ideas, what it really represents is a civilized aspiration. People ask me how can I, a black man, be such an outspoken patriot. And my answer is that there is no example that I know in the literature of world politics that is more stunning than the American effort to raise black people out of legalized slavery and bring them, finally by the actions of the Supreme Court, into full citizenship. We have not fully succeeded yet, but we have surely transformed our country. We have seen our ideas civilize our culture. Not just for blacks. It has liberated white people as well.

Sadly, in the rush to "understand" the 9/11 attacks, the social studies establishment has bungled a stunning opportunity to teach the history and importance of American constitutionalism. "It was not self-evident in 1776," historian Lance Banning wrote in 1987,

> that all men are created equal, that governments derive their just authority from popular consent, or that good governments exist in order to protect God-given rights. These concepts are not undeniable in any age. [Including today!] From the point of view of 18th century Europeans, they contradicted common sense. The notions that a sound society could operate without natural subordination, where men were either commoners or nobles, or that a stable government could be based on elections, seemed both frightening and ridiculously at odds with the obvious lessons of the past.

Why did James Madison grasp in 1788 a reality that social studies "experts," post-modernists, and Marxists fail to understand two centuries later? "If men were angels," he wrote, "no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. . . . You must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself." Why did Americans develop such beliefs at a time when no other country lived by them? The question itself is dead on arrival in the world of multicultural social studies education because it suggests American exceptionalism.

The multiculturalist perspective has, in effect, become a rationalization for the most reactionary forces in the world today.

As we approach the second anniversary of September 11, this multiculturalist perspective has, in effect, become a rationalization for the most reactionary forces in the world today. As historian Bernard Lewis recently observed: Muslim extremists reject the separation of church and state; reject equality for women; reject equality or even tolerance for same-sex relationships (homosexuals were routinely buried alive during the Taliban regime); reject freedom of speech, thought, and religion; and reject foreign cultural influences. Americans can study Muslim culture and history in hundreds of colleges and universities, but American or Western studies programs are virtually non-existent in the Muslim world.

To paraphrase the 1983 commission on excellence in education, we must recognize that, if the enemies of open, democratic societies had used force to impose historical and civic ignorance on our children, we would have considered it an act of war. Instead, we have done this to ourselves.

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Civic and Historical Literacy for a Dangerous World

Lucien Ellington

Since the events of 9/11 and our nation's subsequent struggles against evil, I have been simultaneously encouraged and afraid when I experience young peoples' reactions. My encouragement comes from personal conversations with children and teenagers and through watching television and reading accounts of what countless young people said about the very real threats to our civilization. Most young Americans have exhibited intuitively patriotic reactions to our nation's pursuit of the enemies of the United States.

My fear is rooted in the fact that most of those patriotic reactions seem only intuitive. I am in daily contact with far too many young people who are confused or ignorant about the history of this country, other cultures, and what it really means to be an American citizen. Even the future history and social science teachers in my classes at a middle-level state university often don't know seminal dates and events in world and U.S. history and lack other basic knowledge from the social sciences that is essential to civic literacy. Numerous studies illustrating national civic and historical ignorance on the part of the public in general, and young people in particular, confirm my own impressions. One survey conducted shortly before the second Gulf War indicated that, although the majority of Americans could not find Iraq on a world map, the problem was particularly serious among students who were in their late teens and early twenties. What more graphic evidence is required that students are not learning the most basic historical and social science content?

Even future history and social science teachers in my classes often don't know seminal dates and events in world and U.S. history and lack other basic knowledge that is essential to civic literacy.

Why are we largely, in times that require the most informed citizens, a nation of civic and historical illiterates? Though this situation has many causes, the primary reasons are the low level of social studies instruction in the nation's schools and the almost complete lack of clear history standards in the states. Other factors exacerbate these problems.

- *The lack of emphasis on content knowledge in colleges of education and university history departments.* Most social studies education professors denigrate content knowledge as "trivial pursuits." Most history professors who work with future teachers think it beneath them to ask objective questions that ascertain whether a student knows something as basic as the decade in which the Civil War was fought. When asked why students aren't held accountable for actually knowing, say, the date of the fall of the Roman Empire in the West, the typical historian will respond that this kind of content should have been learned in middle or high school.

Theoretically, the historians are correct, but they have little inkling of vacuous fads—like multiple intelligences and constructivism—that rob students of the chance to acquire genuine historical knowledge in K-12 classrooms. The lack of content-oriented classroom history instruction in the lower grades requires academic historians to do the unthinkable and teach the basics to college students.

Achievement of student social cohesion through knowledge of our traditions and institutions should be a paramount goal of all history and social science teachers.

◦ *The clear ideological bias that many education and history professors exhibit.* Contemporary and historical comparisons provide strong evidence that the United States, despite our flaws, is one of the world's most evolved nations. All nations have used schools to create a sense of social cohesion in the young based upon common historical and civic knowledge. Achievement of student social cohesion through knowledge of our traditions and institutions should be a paramount goal of all history and social science teachers. Good teachers can achieve this goal without resorting to jingoism or ignoring our societal flaws. Unfortunately, as several studies indicate, a disproportionately high number of the current generation of academic historians, because of their own political leanings, do not agree with the notion of positive American exceptionalism. Most social studies education professors, as a colleague and I have learned from our own research, are ideologically to the left of the typical history teacher and are therefore likely to teach that we are a severely flawed society. Our graduating education majors do not leave university with a clear idea that they have a duty to promote love of country through their instruction, or even to impact the content knowledge required to present an honest account of American and world history.

◦ *Most states' meager requirements to teach history and social science.* Typically, teachers can teach history, civics, and economics without an academic major in the subject they teach, and with only a smattering of lower level content requirements in several of these areas. Since the requirements are so lax, it is quite common for athletic coaches to "qualify" to teach history, regardless of their background. Students will never learn any subject if their instructors are ignorant of it.

◦ *The scarce amount of history and civics actually taught in early grades.* Most young people who love history and are good at it first became excited about the heroes and villains of the past when they were small children. Yet, thanks to more than 70 years of the "expanding horizons" social studies curriculum in elementary schools—a progressive education relic with no empirical research base, whereby young students learn about "Our Friends and Neighbors on the Police Force" instead of Paul Revere or Rosa Parks—children have very little exposure to the stories of heroes, battles, victories, and defeats that most of them would find interesting. So, it is almost a guarantee that young children won't get excited about history, since they have so little exposure to it.

- *The contraction of what little early grade history now exists in favor of reading and mathematics.* Although the No Child Left Behind act is a much-needed step in improving standards in public schools, its relentless focus on reading and math leaves even less class time for civics and history instruction since many administrators and teachers think instruction in these subjects won't improve the standardized test scores for which they are accountable.

In our post-9/11 world, it is more important than ever that these shortcomings be fixed. Specifically:

- State governments should replace generic social studies teacher certification requirements with a requirement that secondary history or social science teachers have the equivalent of an academic major in history, economics, or government.
- There should be a national campaign to rid elementary schools of the "expanding horizons" curriculum and replace it with one that is solidly grounded in exciting and rich history, civics, and geography content—similar to that of the E.D. Hirsch-inspired Core Knowledge Curriculum.
- Policy makers and the general public should realize that, although literacy and numeracy for all are imperative, achievement of that goal can be rendered compatible with student acquisition of solid education in American and world history, civics, geography, and economics so long as administrators and teachers carefully structure their curricula and classroom assignments.

The solution to our students' widespread historical and civic illiteracy won't be easy, but the times demand it. Now more than ever, there is an absolutely critical need for thoughtful citizens who understand both national and international affairs.

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What Teachers Need to Know About America and the World

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Reading this volume, a teacher or curriculum supervisor might look at the wide range of topics discussed and plausibly wonder if there is anything we *shouldn't* be teaching our children about terror, tyranny, and freedom.

It's a fair question. After all, classroom time is limited, and topics need to be sorted for importance, for relevance, and for potential impact. So practically speaking, what issues are of paramount important and which documents (and other materials) are the surest way into them?

Practically speaking, what issues are of paramount important and which documents (and other materials) are the surest way into them?

In making some suggestions, we stress again the central role of a general, working knowledge of U.S. history and government. If our young people cannot construct a viable narrative of the nation's history, then there is little hope that that nation can forge a common strength of purpose and defend itself from enemies within and without. If they don't know what made George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King, Jr. great, they won't know how to find greatness in themselves and their fellow citizens. If they don't understand why we commemorate Independence Day, Columbus Day, Thanksgiving, and other national holidays, great and small, they won't understand the events that shape their present and future. This guidance, of course is not meant to be comprehensive, but simply to start the conversation about what is important.

In this section, authors seek to give teachers a guide to some of the important documents of American history and the pressing issues that face the global community today. Some of the essays cover older documents that are not read enough in U.S. secondary schools (and often, not in colleges and universities, either). So we have included excerpts from Abraham Lincoln's *Address to the Young Men's Lyceum* (with introduction by Amy Kass), an epochal 1838 speech in which the future 16th president sketched the contours of a "civil religion" based on reverence for the laws. Educators may take heart that even America's greatest President and most passionate prophet struggled with how to inculcate love of country in the young.

E.D. Hirsch and James Q. Wilson develop some of the issues around teaching, respectively, about religion and war. For Hirsch, it is important to stress America's Enlightenment roots as a place where religious disagreements are sublimated for the common good. Wilson reminds teachers that the study of war remains an important way to understand history—and distinguishes just wars from terror attacks.

John Agresto, and Gloria Sesso and John Pyne, take up specific documents that teachers should themselves know well and may also make part of their instruction: the Preamble to the

Constitution, *Common Sense*, FDR's "Four Freedoms" speech, and others. Theodore Rabb draws medieval parallels to September 11 and the War on Terror as a way of demonstrating that students can use history to understand present-day events.

Finally, we turn to contemporary issues and frame them for teachers and students. Sandra Stotsky and Ellen Shnidman, using the annual Freedom House surveys of freedom around the globe as an instructional tool, lay out some questions that students should consider when comparing the American way of life and governance to those of other nations. Mitchell Pearlstein reconsiders the old notion of the tradeoffs between liberty and security. Stephen Schwartz sketches out the "crisis of Islam" that lies behind the September 11 attacks. And Stanley Kurtz lays out the new American foreign policy idea that became the basis of the Iraq War—the Doctrine of Pre-emption.

We close this volume with excerpts from a recent speech to the U.S. Congress by British Prime Minister Tony Blair. In our view, this magisterial address should take its place among the great speeches that attempt to define the American character and America's role in human history. As Blair says, to the question, "Why America?" only one answer is possible: because "Destiny put you in this place in history in this moment in time, and the task is yours to do."

Lincoln on "The Perpetuation of Our Political Institutions"

Amy Kass

Since September 11, 2001, much of our nation's attention has understandably been focused on combating the forces of terrorism directed against us from abroad. Meeting this threat depends largely on military force and diplomacy, activities that are mainly the responsibility of our political leaders and armed forces. But all citizens bear responsibility for attending to an equally important task: preserving our institutions and the practices of freedom and equality that are our nation's glory and the roots of our strength at home and abroad. While our military seeks victory in the fight against terrorism and despotism, we must seek to ensure that we continue to deserve such victory.

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Lincoln worried that lawless conduct, if unchecked, would breed disrespect for the rule of law, which would alienate the affections of decent, peace-loving people from their government.

This subject, the perpetuation of our political institutions, is the theme of Abraham Lincoln's famous speech to the Young Men's Lyceum in Springfield, Illinois, delivered in 1838 at a time of civil unrest and impending crisis. Lincoln was in the first instance concerned about the rash of violent actions, perpetrated by unruly and savage mobs, that had been spreading through much of the country. But his greater concern was the effects that such lawlessness would have on the perpetuation of our free and democratic way of life. Then, as now, the safeguarding of free institutions falls to generations who did not create them but are nonetheless responsible for preserving and transmitting them to subsequent generations.

Lincoln worried that the lawless conduct, if unchecked, would breed disrespect for the rule of law, which would in turn alienate the affections of decent, peace-loving people from their government. Equally important, he feared the rise of potential despots—men of "towering genius" and overweening ambition, from "the family of the lion, or the tribe of the eagle"—who might take advantage of a fearful and alienated people's desire for order, and who, in any case, would rather destroy than perpetuate a polity that could only be a monument to the fame of others. One cannot, Lincoln thought, prevent the birth of such men; but one can provide protections against their gaining power. The remedy he proposed is as sound today as it was then: reverence for and strict adherence to the laws, a disposition and a practice regarded as the "political religion" of the nation. Lincoln acknowledges that there are bad laws and that one should work to change them. But as we seek their reform, "while they continue in force, for the sake of example, they should be religiously observed."

The task for perpetuators—all teachers, including parents and legislators—today as in 1838: to remember our past and the legacy bequeathed us; to learn our laws and institutions and the principles they stand for; to understand the alternatives against which we can see their great merit; and to cultivate the habits of the heart—love of country, self-control, and self-command—that true freedom will ever require.

Excerpts from "Address to the Young Men's Lyceum"

Abraham Lincoln
January 27, 1838

In the great journal of things happening under the sun, we, the American People, find ourselves in the peaceful possession, of the fairest portion of the earth, as regards extent of territory, fertility of soil, and salubrity of climate. We find ourselves under the government of a system of political institutions, conducing more essentially to the ends of civil and religious liberty, than any of which the history of former times tells us. We, when mounting the stage of existence, found ourselves the legal inheritors of these fundamental blessings. We toiled not in the

acquirement or establishment of them—they are a legacy bequeathed us, by a *once* hardy, brave, and patriotic, but *now* lamented and departed race of ancestors. Their's was the task (and nobly they performed it) to possess themselves, and through themselves, us, of this goodly land; and to uprear upon its hills and its valleys, a political edifice of liberty and equal rights; 'tis ours only, to transmit these, the former, unprofaned by the foot of an invader; the latter, undecayed by the lapse of time and untorn by usurpation, to the latest generation that fate shall permit the world to know. This task of gratitude to our fathers, justice to ourselves, duty to posterity, and love for our species in general, all imperatively require us faithfully to perform. . . .

If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher. As a nation of freemen, we must live through all time, or die by suicide.

I hope I am over wary; but if I am not, there is, even now, something of ill-omen, amongst us. I mean the increasing disregard for law which pervades the country; the growing disposition to substitute the wild and furious passions, in lieu of the sober judgment of Courts; and the worse than savage mobs, for the executive ministers of justice. This disposition is awfully fearful in any community; and that it now exists in ours, though grating to our feelings to admit, it would be a violation of truth, and an insult to our intelligence, to deny. Accounts of outrages committed by mobs, form the every-day news of the times. They have pervaded the country, from New England to Louisiana;—they are neither peculiar to the eternal snows of the former, nor the burning suns of the latter;—they are not the creature of climate—neither are they confined to the slave-holding, or the non-slave-holding States. Alike, they spring up among the pleasure hunting masters of Southern slaves, and the order loving citizens of the land of steady habits. Whatever, then, their cause may be, it is common to the whole country. . . .

Let every American, every lover of liberty, every well wisher to his posterity, swear by the blood of the Revolution, never to violate ... the laws of the country.

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But you are, perhaps, ready to ask, "What has this to do with the perpetuation of our political institutions?" I answer, it has much to do with it. Its direct consequences are, comparatively speaking, but a small evil; and much of its danger consists, in the proneness of our minds, to regard its direct, as its only consequences. Abstractly considered, the hanging of the gamblers at Vicksburg, was of but little consequence. They constitute a portion of population, that is worse than useless in any community; and their death, if no pernicious example be set by it, is never matter of reasonable regret with any one. If they were annually swept, from the stage of existence, by the plague or small pox, honest men would, perhaps, be much profited, by the operation. —Similar too, is the correct reasoning, in regard to the burning of the negro at St. Louis. He had forfeited his life, by the perpetuation of an outrageous murder, upon one of the

most worthy and respectable citizens of the city; and had not he died as he did, he must have died by the sentence of the law, in a very short time afterwards. As to him alone, it was as well the way it was, as it could otherwise have been.—But the example in either case, was fearful.—When men take it in their heads to day, to hang gamblers, or burn murderers, they should recollect, that, in the confusion usually attending such transactions, they will be as likely to hang or burn some one who is neither a gambler nor a murderer as one who is; and that, acting upon the example they set, the mob of to-morrow, may, and probably will, hang or burn some of them by the very same mistake. And not only so; the innocent, those who have ever set their faces against violations of law in every shape, alike with the guilty, fall victims to the ravages of mob law; and thus it goes on, step by step, till all the walls erected for the defense of the persons and property of individuals, are trodden down, and disregarded. But all this even, is not the full extent of the evil. . . . By such things, the feelings of the best citizens will become more or less alienated from [the government]; and thus it will be left without friends, or with too few, and those few too weak, to make their friendship effectual. At such a time and under such circumstances, men of sufficient talent and ambition will not be wanting to seize the opportunity, strike the blow, and overturn that fair fabric, which for the last half century, has been the fondest hope, of the lovers of freedom, throughout the world.

Let reverence for the laws ... be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges; let it be written in Primers, spelling books, and in Almanacs.

I know the American People are *much* attached to their Government;—I know they would suffer *much* for its sake;—I know they would endure evils long and patiently, before they would ever think of exchanging it for another. Yet, notwithstanding all this, if the laws be continually despised and disregarded, if their rights to be secure in their persons and property, are held by no better tenure than the caprice of a mob, the alienation of their affections from the Government is the natural consequence; and to that, sooner or later, it must come.

Here then, is one point at which danger may be expected.

The question recurs, "how shall we fortify against it?" The answer is simple. Let every American, every lover of liberty, every well wisher to his posterity, swear by the blood of the Revolution, never to violate in the least particular, the laws of the country; and never to tolerate their violation by others. As the patriots of seventy-six did to the support of the Declaration of Independence, so to the support of the Constitution and Laws, let every American pledge his life, his property, and his sacred honor;—let every man remember that to violate the law, is to trample on the blood of his father, and to tear the character of his own, and his children's liberty. Let reverence for the laws, be breathed by every American mother, to the lisping babe, that prattles on her lap—let it be taught in schools, in seminaries, and in colleges; let it be written in Primers, spelling books, and in Almanacs;—let it be preached

from the pulpit, proclaimed in legislative halls, and enforced in courts of justice. And, in short, let it become the *political religion* of the nation; and let the old and the young, the rich and the poor, the grave and the gay, of all sexes and tongues, and colors and conditions, sacrifice unceasingly upon its altars.

While ever a state of feeling, such as this, shall universally, or even, very generally prevail throughout the nation, vain will be every effort, and fruitless every attempt, to subvert our national freedom. . . .

But, it may be asked, why suppose danger to our political institutions? Have we not preserved them for more than fifty years? And why may we not for fifty times as long?

We hope there is no *sufficient* reason. We hope all dangers may be overcome; but to conclude that no danger may ever arise, would itself be extremely dangerous. There are now, and will hereafter be, many causes, dangerous in their tendency, which have not existed heretofore; and which are not too insignificant to merit attention. That our government should have been maintained in its original form from its establishment until now, is not much to be wondered at. It had many props to support it through that period, which now are decayed, and crumbled away. Through that period, it was felt by all, to be an undecided experiment; now, it is understood to be a successful one.—Then, all that sought celebrity and fame, and distinction, expected to find them in the success of that experiment. Their *all* was staked upon it:— their destiny was *inseparably* linked with it. Their ambition aspired to display before an admiring world, a practical demonstration of the truth of a proposition, which had hitherto been considered, at best no better, than problematical; namely, *the capability of a people to govern themselves.* If they succeeded, they were to be immortalized; their names were to be transferred to counties and cities, and rivers and mountains; and to be revered and sung, and toasted through all time. If they failed, they were to be called knaves and fools, and fanatics for a fleeting hour; then to sink and be forgotten. They succeeded. The experiment is successful; and thousands have won their deathless names in making it so. But the game is caught; and I believe it is true, that with the catching, end the pleasures of the chase. This field of glory is harvested, and the crop is already appropriated. But new reapers will arise, and *they*, too, will seek a field. It is to deny, what the history of the world tells us is true, to suppose that men of ambition and talents will not continue to spring up amongst us. And, when they do, they will as naturally seek the gratification of their ruling passion, as others have so done before them. The question then, is, can that gratification be found in supporting and maintaining an edifice that has been erected by others? Most certainly it cannot. Many great and good men sufficiently qualified for any task they should undertake, may ever be found, whose ambition would

Reason, cold, calculating, unimpassioned reason, must furnish all the materials for our future support and defence.

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inspire to nothing beyond a seat in Congress, a gubernatorial or a presidential chair; *but such belong not to the family of the lion, or the tribe of the eagle.* What! think you these places would satisfy an Alexander, a Caesar, or a Napoleon?—Never! Towering genius distains a beaten path. It seeks regions hitherto unexplored.—It sees *no distinction* in adding story to story, upon the monuments of fame, erected to the memory of others. It *denies* that it is glory enough to serve under any chief. It *scorns* to tread in the footsteps of *any* predecessor, however illustrious. It thirsts and burns for distinction; and, if possible, it will have it, whether at the expense of emancipating slaves, or enslaving freemen. Is it unreasonable then to expect, that some man possessed of the loftiest genius, coupled with ambition sufficient to push it to its utmost stretch, will at some time, spring up among us?...

Here, then, is a probable case, highly dangerous, and such a one as could not have well existed heretofore.

Another reason which *once was*; but which, to the same extent, is *now no more*, has done much in maintaining our institutions thus far. I mean the powerful influence which the interesting scenes of the revolution had upon the *passions* of the people as distinguished from their judgment. By this influence, the jealousy, envy, and avarice, incident to our nature, and so common to a state of peace, prosperity, and conscious strength, were, for the time, in a great measure smothered and rendered inactive; while the deep-rooted principles of *hate*, and the powerful motive of *revenge*, instead of being turned against each other, were directed exclusively against the British nation. And thus, from the force of circumstances, the basest principles of our nature, were either made to lie dormant, or to become the active agents in the advancement of the noblest cause—that of establishing and maintaining civil and religious liberty.

But this state of feeling must *fade, is fading, has faded*, with the circumstances that produced it.

I do not mean to say, that the scenes of the revolution *are now* or *ever will* be entirely forgotten; but that like every thing else, they must fade upon the memory of the world, and grow more and more dim by the lapse of time. . . . They were the pillars of the temple of liberty; and now, that they have crumbled away, that temple must fall, unless we, their descendants, supply their places with other pillars, hewn from the solid quarry of sober reason. Passion has helped us; but can do so no more. It will in future be our enemy. Reason, cold, calculating, unimpassioned reason, must furnish all the materials for our future support and defence.—Let those materials be moulded into *general intelligence, sound morality*, and in particular, *a reverence for the constitution and laws*: and, that we improved to the last; that we remained free to the last; that we revered his name to the last; that, during his long sleep, we permitted no hostile foot to pass over or desecrate his resting place; shall be that which to learn the last trump shall awaken our WASHINGTON.

Upon these let the proud fabric of freedom rest, as the rock of its basis; and as truly as has been said of the only greater institution, "*the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*"

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Moral Progress in History

E.D. Hirsch, Jr.

Thomas Jefferson listed just four accomplishments for his tombstone—that he had authored the Declaration of Independence, that he had served as President of the United States, that he had founded a University on Enlightenment principles where "we are not afraid to tolerate any error so long as truth is left free to combat it." He also listed a fourth accomplishment. What was it?

Few can answer now. The subsequent success of our nation that Jefferson and his colleagues created let us to take that accomplishment so much for granted that we don't even notice it anymore. But after 9/11 it's essential to teach our children the historical significance of Jefferson's fourth accomplishment, which later became codified in the First Amendment to the Constitution. It was his "Virginia Statute of Religious Freedom," by which Jefferson meant both freedom of and freedom from religion.

Every culture or religion, the Founders said, deserves to be left in peace and freedom so long as it leaves every other culture or religion in peace and freedom.

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America's religiously motivated enemies do not accept a founding premise of the First Amendment, that every culture or religion is deserving of respect. Our very tolerant way of regarding other people's traditions and beliefs contrasts sharply with the intolerant way our adversaries view American traditions and beliefs. This contrast can create a problem for us and our children if our traditions of tolerance are allowed to lapse into facile relativism, under the bland illusion that everybody now operates under the benign post-Jefferson notion of tolerance, which is our inheritance from the European Enlightenment.

It's therefore important to teach our children the big, crucial restriction that the Enlightenment and our founders placed on the idea of religious and cultural toleration. Every culture or religion, they said, deserves to be left in peace and freedom so long as it leaves every

other culture or religion in peace and freedom. The officers of the state, Jefferson said in his "Statute for Religious Freedom" must vigorously interfere in the practice of religion when its principles "break out into overt acts against peace and good order." "That," he said in his *Notes on Religion*, "is the true extent of toleration."

This limited concept of toleration, duly constrained by the rights of others, was a novel idea when it was developed by European thinkers in the 17th century. They contemplated the senseless wars of religion in which thousands of Protestants and Catholics had killed one another over points of theology, and concluded that since nobody can be sure about matters of theology, it was not only pointless but also deeply wrong to kill people over rival religious beliefs. Locke had argued this political idea in his "Letter Concerning Toleration" (1689), and Jonathan Swift satirically pressed it home in *Gulliver's Travels* (1726) where he showed the Big Enders going to war against the Little Enders over the best way to eat a boiled egg—whether to crack the big end or the little end first. Locke and Swift were favorite authors of our Founders.

There is a gap between our very tolerant way of regarding other people's traditions and beliefs and the intolerant ways in which our adversaries view American traditions and beliefs.

Toleration became a key political idea for our nation and of the modern era. The United States, the first nation explicitly to incorporate that Enlightenment idea into its legal fabric, became the first truly modern country in history—the first post-Enlightenment nation based on the idea of limited toleration. That idea is a foundation of our freedoms, including the right to be left alone, and to think, and to speak as we wish—always with the crucial proviso that our actions do not restrict the right of our fellow citizens to do the same.

Many of the political troubles that persist in the modern world stem from the persistence of intolerant, pre-Enlightenment, Medieval ideas. For all the positive things that could be said about the Middle Ages, we teachers should deplore its intolerance of heresy. People were burned at the stake for their beliefs. Wars were launched—not only the "crusades" against Islam, but also, in later years, wars against other Christian sects. The critical issue of 9/11 is intolerant Medievalism versus the tolerant Enlightenment.

Today, whether we are dealing with "radical Islamists," or with radical Zionists who make settlements in Palestinian territory, we confront people with a similar Medieval mind set, people who think that religious belief is absolute and justifies all actions in its service. That conviction is held so absolutely that everything, including civil peace and other people's beliefs must give way. Everything including war and the murder of innocents is justified by the absolute righteousness of one's belief and the unrighteousness of the other person's belief. Heresy becomes a justification for murder. In the eyes of the righteous, we Americans are heretics. Parenthetically,

we need to remind our students that even within our own country, among "fundamentalists," we must beware of a tendency to absolutism in religious belief when this strength of conviction goes to the extreme of impinging on the freedom of others.

America is, remarkably, the most religious country among the advanced industrial nations. Here no one need be afraid or ashamed of practicing religion openly. But, paradoxically, religion is strong in the United States precisely because it is, on one point weak. Religion is not allowed to push anybody around—if we remain true to our founding ideas, and to the First Amendment. We need to remind ourselves and our students that we enjoy our freedoms because our founders decided to make civic freedom and civic peace trump religious doctrine. Particular religions are strong in the United States just because Ethics is supposed to trump Religion with a capital R. In the United States, under the Constitution, Ethics trumps Theology. Our repudiation of the Medieval worldview, our placing of ethics, freedom, and civic peace above religious doctrine, is the essence of the Enlightenment—and of our Constitution, which forbids any injurious extremism in the name of mere religious belief. This was a new idea in history. It was a great contribution to humanity offered by the Enlightenment and by this country. It is a principle as absolute as any in the great religions. It marks a permanent advance in morals and social order that we teachers need to help make prevail.

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Parsing the Preamble

John Agresto

The aftermath of 9/11, the War on Terror, and the unsettling effect of the Iraq War all make this an exquisite moment for teaching, since ideas and values, often so abstract, now are alive, threatened, active, and in conflict.

How to take advantage of this moment in the classroom? Begin with the simple notion that educated people know something about the history, heritage, and spirit of their own way of life as well as something of the character of other cultures.

Beyond the facts and events of America's short history, our students should know we're not a nation that, like Topsy, simply grew. We were made—"founded," as political scientists like to say. And in being founded, the people we call the Founders wrote about what they were trying to establish. Some of those documents are appropriate for classroom use, and all of them should be part of the mind and understanding of every teacher.

It's too easy to dismiss the Declaration by saying Jefferson really didn't mean it since he had slaves. But do we mean it? Do we dismiss it as mere rhetoric?

For example, the Declaration of Independence should—*must*—be understood by every American, not as a finely worded, old-fashioned piece of political sentiment but as something fundamental to the meaning of America. It's too easy to dismiss the Declaration by saying Jefferson really didn't mean it since he had slaves. But do *we* mean it? Do *we* dismiss it as mere rhetoric? Do we believe that all of us are in some real way equal? In what ways? Do we believe that some people are superior to others and should rule them? Do we believe that liberty is good and just? Do we believe that our students should be prepared to become free men and women, or do we think they should learn to follow and obey? *Do we understand how dedication to these ideals and truths makes us different from so many other places in history and in the world?* By talking and thinking about liberty and equality with their students, perhaps teachers will gain greater sympathy for Jefferson, who had the courage and honesty to say what he knew was true, while knowing that living that truth was immensely difficult.

Spend some time looking at the Constitution, too. And look not just at the Bill of Rights, where we all rush, but also at the Preamble. Why is the first thing it mentions our wish to form a "more perfect union"? Why do we want to be one people? What does it mean to be one people? What exactly is it that *makes* us one people? We spend a good deal of time nowadays proclaiming our diversity—but what is it that binds us together and makes us not only one, but also different from others?

"Establish justice." Talk with your students about our country's conception of justice. What parts of it seem universal—for all people at all times—and what parts of it seem peculiarly American?

"Ensure domestic tranquility." Is it really true, as we hear from many a pseudo-philosopher these days, that security and liberty are opposites, that if we aim at order and domestic tranquility—at peace and security—we will surely destroy rights and undermine liberty? Think through with your students the extent to which rights, liberty, justice, and even friendships can endure without "domestic tranquility."

"Provide for the common defense." We pledged not that we'd defend our rights or our interests or ourselves but each other. What does it mean to be an enemy of America? What obliga-

tions do we as citizens have as we work to make good on our pledge to defend our friends, our neighbors, our fellow citizens, and our country?

"Promote the general welfare." How quaint for the Preamble to say this and not say "to promote every person's own particular interests as he or she sees them." What could it possibly mean to say that there's a "general welfare" of an entire country, a common good that is distinct from the sum of all our interests and desires?

"Secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity." The Preamble's final words enshrine the idea that human liberty is a blessing for all people and that America's great reason for being is to break the chains that have kept people from being all that they might. What is it about being human that makes slavery and subjugation so manifestly wrong? Why is liberty so clear a blessing that men will fight and die to keep it alive and pass it on to their posterity?

My hope in all this is that we can teach our students *what* constitutes this thing called America, which has so recently found itself under savage attack, and *why* it is as it is—our distinctive goals and our reasons for the American way of life. But I've also been in education long enough to know that the desire to criticize and point a finger at America's limitations and shortcomings is part of the makeup of many teachers.

Many of America's limitations and shortcomings are consequences of principles that we revere. Don't assume that our failings necessarily result from having lost sight of our ideals.

Since I know it will be done, let me offer guidelines for doing it intelligently. First, think clearly about which of our shortcomings are attributable to being Americans and which are simply the result of human nature. Recognize that living in a free country might allow the defects of our common human nature to be given greater scope. Don't blame America for things that are simply human. But do try to learn with your students what being human entails.

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Second, consider how many of America's limitations and shortcomings are consequences of principles that we revere. Don't assume that our failings necessarily result from our having lost sight of our ideals. Part of the reason the worldwide attack on America is so serious and so *radical* is that our enemies well know that much of what we are—our libertinism, our materialism, our lack of respect for traditional values, our insubordination to what they see as Divine Will—result from the very principles we hold dear, including individual liberty, equality, democracy, general prosperity, and a belief in human progress. This is why it's important to see that it is not simply Americans under attack, but the *idea* of America.

To understand not only our hopes but also the limits of those hopes, nothing is better to read in class than Tocqueville. I read portions of *Democracy in America* as a sophomore in high

school with an extraordinarily gifted history teacher and the sense of that book has remained with me ever since. If you think this is too hard for your students, please don't think it too hard for you to learn from. Look, especially, at Tocqueville's section (in the second volume) on American individualism, self-interest, sentiment, restlessness, love of comfort, and softness of character.

In this age of frantically trying to learn about others, the time has come to re-learn about ourselves: ourselves as humans, as individuals, and as Americans. It's time to see clearly our principles, our character, our virtues, and our limitations. The events of the last few years have all the character of a total attack—on our lives, our friends, our fortunes, and our ideals. Our job as educators is to meet it with intelligence and sobriety, clarity and steadfastness, and with the most serious attention to ideas.

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Five Defining Documents

Gloria Sesso and John Pyne

Jefferson knew that education was the key to maintaining a republican government; that liberty and happiness were contingent upon a good government; and that the basis of that government was "informing the discretion" of the people. It is vital that today's students are in touch with and able to affirm the values that define us as a nation—the values that the September 11 terrorists and their controllers scorned and attacked and the values from which tyrants shield their people. The grandeur and significance of our social, political, and economic values need to be celebrated as a unifying experience because these values will help mediate the understanding of governmental actions toward terrorists and help us to weigh the balance between national security and individual liberty.

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Agents of tyranny and oppression continue to challenge our way of life and assault the foundations of a free society. It is essential that students understand what these foundations are, why they are worth defending, and how our forefathers have protected them throughout history. Many documents shed light on who Americans are and what we value. It is important for stu-

dents to study these documents by focusing on the context in which they emerged, both in order to understand the struggles of the past and to confront the issues that challenge us today.

Documents such as Thomas Paine's *Common Sense*, the Declaration of Independence, *Letters from an American Farmer*, the Gettysburg Address, FDR's "Four Freedoms" speech (with Norman Rockwell's Four Freedoms visuals), and Ronald Reagan's statement to the country after the Challenger explosion help to define the American nation and to unite us as a people. From these documents (and others like them), we can learn from the successes and failures of our forebears how to respond and deal with challenges to liberty and freedom.

Students must focus on the context in which important documents emerged, both in order to understand the struggles of the past and to confront the issues that challenge us today.

When Thomas Paine wrote that "Freedom hath been hunted round the globe. . . . O! receive the fugitive, and prepare an asylum for mankind," he gave voice to our purpose as a nation. America would be the place where opportunity to develop economically and individually would be glorified and promoted, and where oppression would give way to freedom and individual liberty. The American people would oppose all tyrants—religious, political, social, or economic.

Drawing upon Paine's ideas, the words of the Declaration of Independence elaborate upon this theme. The Declaration's premises have evolved into America's unifying ideology: the consent of the governed, participation for all citizens, the equality of citizenship, and the importance of due process, voting, and the active pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness. Teachers should help students analyze the Declaration in terms both of its original meaning and what it has evolved into as a formative source of what it means to be an American and the responsibilities of citizenship. Among those responsibilities is the duty to participate in government—to keep vigilant and make sure that it is protecting our happiness in safety and security. What does that imply about a citizen's responsibilities today? Students need to be able to analyze the Declaration's ringing phrases in light of today's key questions of liberty and security.

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In his famous Gettysburg Address, President Lincoln built upon the history of a young nation and linked the conflict of the day directly with the conflicts inherent in the American Revolution. His "four score and seven years" pointed to 1776, and he "revolutionized the Declaration's ideals" further when he spoke of dedication "to the proposition that all men are created equal." To Lincoln, equality was the major tenet of the "government of the people, by the people, and for the people." Teachers should help students understand why the struggles of the American Revolution were important to the Civil War; they should help students understand what Lincoln meant when he said "these dead shall not have died in vain" and what was "the new birth of freedom" of which he spoke. Lincoln viewed the Declaration of Independence as the founding moment of American identity.

Crevecouer's *Letters from An American Farmer* is not widely used in K-12 classrooms, but it is an invaluable tool for teaching students how early Americans differentiated themselves from "Old Europe" (a phrase in use again today) and what implications that has for us. Crevecouer asks, "What then is the American, this new man?" He answers, "He is an American, who, leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced, the new government he obeys, and the new rank he holds. . . . Here individuals of all races are melted into a new race of man, whose labors and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world. Americans are the western pilgrims." The American is a product of different cultures united by freedom of opportunity, and the "rewards of his industry follow with equal steps the progress of his labour."

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Teachers should also be encouraged to use Norman Rockwell's 1943 series of illustrated covers for the *Saturday Evening Post* along with FDR's "Four Freedoms" speech. The evocative illustrations give life to Roosevelt's rousing address and can help students better understand the speech. Specifically, analyzing the pictures for what they say about America's commitment to freedom at home and abroad will help students make reasoned decisions about U.S. foreign and domestic policy and its alignment to original values. Analysis is crucial to understanding the meaning of visuals. For example, in the "Freedom of Speech" illustration, students need to be asked questions such as:

- Who is speaking? What do you notice about what he is wearing? How does he convey strength and meaning of his words?
- How are the people looking at him? Why?
- Notice the "Town Annual Report" in the hands of a community member. Why did Norman Rockwell place that in the illustration?
- What is Rockwell saying about freedom of speech, citizenship, and consent of the governed? How does that relate to what FDR meant?
- What do Rockwell's illustration and FDR's speech say to us about the responsibilities of citizenship today? Do you agree?

Finally, President Reagan's statement to the country after the Challenger disaster, like many of his public speeches, recapitulates the ideals of the founding documents. The virtues of courage, responsibility, and commitment to individual achievement need to be reinforced by connecting words with actions in the American context.

The cowardly attack on Americans at home and abroad by terrorists and the ongoing determination by the United States to fight for the principles of liberty and freedom is an opportunity for students to reflect more deeply on our shared values and the strengths gained in the study of individual self sacrifice and the celebration of common—but lofty—goals and principles. Doing so adheres to Jefferson's prescription for the strength of a republican government, "informing the discretion" of its citizens.

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What Students Should Know About War

James Q. Wilson

The most mischievous view about killing innocent people is that a killer who is a terrorist to his victims is a hero to his supporters. That argument has been used in an effort to undermine the moral blame that ought to attach to people who kill innocent women and children, whether the killers are members of the Irish Republican Army, Soviet leaders who tried to "purge" their societies, the Nazis who killed millions of Jews and Gypsies, or Pol Pot who killed millions of his fellow Cambodians. They were terrorists pure and simple, not heroes. Historians know this. Their own countrymen know this. Our teachers must ensure that our children come to know this.

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Our children also need to understand the nature of war—a topic some teachers eschew because it is so unpleasant, others because it is such an old-fashioned way to explain history. Yet throughout human history, people have waged war against one another. Peace has often been no more common than battles. For at least two thousand years, however, thinkers have debated the circumstances under which it is right to fight a war. This does not mean they have always come to the right conclusions. Philosophers and religious authorities sometimes err. Yet the influence of their ideas can be seen in how often newspapers and television programs raise questions about whether American troops fighting in Afghanistan or Vietnam have unnecessarily killed innocent people.

The argument that war can sometimes be justified is called the "just war" theory. Its central arguments are that war cannot be used for unimportant reasons and that, in a war, it is wrong to attack innocent civilians deliberately and without it being an inherent part of a campaign against military targets.

If innocent civilians are deliberately killed when they are not the accidental casualties of a military campaign, we call such killing terrorism. Terrorism is designed to frighten civilians, wreak revenge, call attention to the terrorists, and undermine a government's desire to defend its citizens.

The United States has frequently been the victim of terrorist attacks, as when Pan Am flight 103 was exploded in the air, when bombs were set off in the World Trade Center in 1993, when American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania were bombed, and when over three thousand people were killed by hijacked airliners on September 11, 2001.

That people have been affected by the "just war" argument can be seen in the tendency of some anti-American leaders to claim that September 11 was caused by secret American agents or by Jewish leaders. No one believes this nonsense, but it is worth noting that it is an effort to deflect blame away from the terrorists who actually ordered the attacks.

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It is sometimes hard to draw a bright, clear line between a military campaign in which innocent people are killed and a deliberate terrorist attack on innocent people. Some critics of the American military have argued that, when the United States bombed the civilian sections of German and Japanese cities during World War II, they were committing illegal acts. In my view that argument is wrong, since the goal of these bombing campaigns was to defeat military opponents and thus, in the long run, save lives. But it is worth discussing these arguments in order to help students appraise the "just war" philosophy.

The terrorist attacks of September 11 were carried out by Muslims, but this does not mean that the Islamic faith believes in terrorism any more than atrocities committed by American forces means that Christianity or Judaism endorses terrorism. No religion asserts that innocent people should be the object of a deliberate attack that lacks any legitimate military purpose. In every religion, there have been extremists who corrupt the teachings of their faith in order to justify terrorism, just as in some political philosophies, such as Marxism, there have been people who justified not only terrorism but the execution of many innocent citizens because they were thought to be "enemies of the state."

These are some of the things that our children need to learn about war from their teachers.

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Seeing the Patterns

Theodore Rabb

There are many ways to find meaning in the events of 9/11, but one of the most important is to set them into the perspective of history—to recognize that what happened on that appalling day is part of a pattern stretching back over many centuries. Viewed in that context, the assault on Americans going about their daily lives may remind us of man's repeated inhumanity to man and the persistence of intolerance and hatred. But the long view is helpful above all because we know the end of those earlier stories, and the 20/20 vision of hindsight can help us to see how deluded is the claim that large-scale murder and violence, directed at ordinary people, can solve intractable problems.

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Dozens of analogies could be drawn, but just one example from the past can suggest the futility and self-destructiveness of the slaughter of innocents. On August 24, 1572, the feast of St. Bartholomew, hundreds of French Protestants had gathered in Paris for the wedding of one of their leaders. Paris was overwhelmingly a Catholic city in an age when the two branches of Western Christianity were locked in a fierce struggle to persuade people that only their own version of truth, worship, and the path to salvation could be correct.

The possibility of destroying the leadership of France's Protestants as they conveniently assembled in Paris proved too tempting for the Catholics. St. Bartholomew had become a Christian martyr when he was flayed alive—his skin literally torn from his body—and that became the dominant image as the saint's day dawned and a fearsome massacre began. It soon spread throughout France, and within a few days thousands of Protestants had been killed, often in the most brutal fashion.

The result, however, was exactly the opposite of what the perpetrators had hoped. Rather than losing heart, France's Protestants renewed their struggle with increased vigor. And just sev-

enteen years after the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre, one of their leaders who had been a major target but had escaped, Henry of Navarre, became king of France as Henry IV. To be accepted as king, he became a nominal Catholic, but his watchword was to be tolerance and, under his rule, Protestants and Catholics gradually learned to live side by side.

Similar stories can be found dozens of times across many centuries and all cultures. At other times and places, Protestants, too, butchered their enemies, and there is hardly a group of zealous believers who have not, at some point, come to believe that bloodshed is the best means of advancing their views. But ideas and beliefs do not travel well by force. The Roman Emperors could not crush Christianity; persecution could not suffocate the Puritans who helped found America.

Beyond the horror and anguish of September 11, therefore, one needs to understand its ultimate ineffectiveness. If anything, such events merely reinforce the very outlook and commitments that they hope to demolish. They remind us of the insight of Jonathan Swift, an 18th-century clergyman who wrote *Gulliver's Travels*: "We have enough religion to hate one another, but not enough to love one another."

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Democracy At Home and Abroad

Sandra Stotsky and Ellen Shnidman

Among the civic lessons that students ought to learn in the aftermath of 9/11 is that we must be prepared to defend our freedoms against whoever threatens us. But in order to prepare tomorrow's leaders to defend these freedoms effectively, students first need a clear understanding of the political principles upon which our nation was founded, and of the institutions that help preserve those principles. They also need to understand why our freedoms are scorned or despised by others, and discuss how they can recognize when our freedoms are in danger and how we might best safeguard them.

Using information gathered for the annual Freedom House Surveys of political rights and civil liberties in the world , for example, conscientious teachers might have students discuss the following questions:

How do the political principles and institutions we value as Americans differ from those of the societies from which the terrorists came? The principles of all free societies include the rule of law, individual rights, personal responsibility, separation of powers, local self-government, consent of the governed, representative government, free elections, an independent judiciary, and an education that encourages self-criticism as well as critical thinking about other countries and cultures. How are these principles reflected in and supported by concrete institutions and practices in this country?

What are the personal qualities that maintain our peculiarly American institutions and practices? While all who perished on 9/11 should be mourned as victims, teachers should help their students remember and honor some of the innocent civilians as heroes. These include not only the hundreds of firefighters and police who struggled to rescue those entombed in the World Trade Center and died in the line of duty when the towers collapsed, but also those courageous passengers on the United Airlines flight who stormed the cockpit and caused the plane to crash into a field in Pennsylvania instead of into a populated area and a major landmark symbolizing our country. What are the qualities of a hero? What motivated these firefighters and policemen to carry out their duties in a situation of extreme danger? What motivated those United passengers to act on behalf of the lives of unknown others in the face of their own certain death?

How do self-critical education and representative government undermine the authority of both religious zealots and dictators who use their society's institutions to maintain power?

Why are our institutions and practices the object of contempt or hostility by psychopathic leaders of rogue states and religious fanatics? Why do religious fanatics reject the supremacy of secular law over religious law or even deny the distinction between the two? How do a self-critical education and a representative form of government undermine the authority of both the religious zealots and the dictators who use their society's institutions to maintain their own power?

How exactly do dictators of rogue states or religious extremists threaten the institutions of a free society? Terror networks like that of al Qaeda threaten individual Americans and the fabric of our democratic society by instilling fear in the citizenry of being in public places and by compelling us to adopt security measures that in effect limit our personal freedoms. Students should debate what forms of security are compatible with the individual freedoms they value. What are the trade-offs they would accept?

How should Americans combat other dictators like Saddam Hussein, who endanger free people throughout the world through their ambitions to acquire horrific weapons and by their promotion of anti-American hatred in their own society and elsewhere? Students should learn about the many times in American history when we have had to take up arms to defend our freedoms against those who have sought to take them away, to deprive others of their freedom, or to prevent oth-

ers from forming a free society. American intervention in World War I, World War II, Korea, the Persian Gulf, and, most recently, in Bosnia and in Afghanistan are all examples of the American effort to protect our own citizens or the inhabitants of other countries from the murderous intentions of dictatorial regimes and to spread the blessings of freedom to others.

Do other people want the kind of personal freedoms that Americans enjoy and take for granted for themselves? Students should learn about the student protests in Tiananmen Square and about the Afghan women who are now allowed to go to school and receive an education since their country was liberated with the help of American forces. Our students should learn that people have risked and often lost their lives for the opportunity to have political principles and institutions similar to ours. Our students might also be asked to follow carefully what is happening in Iran. Iranian students are now protesting against the clerical dictatorship that runs their country. As Iraqis now begin to develop representative institutions of government for themselves, it is not surprising that some brave citizens in the countries that surround Iraq are starting to think about how they, too, could achieve a more responsive government for themselves.

Students should learn about the student protests in Tiananmen Square and about the Afghan women who are now allowed to be educated since their country's liberation.

Why are the events in Iran especially important for students to follow? Students should learn that Iran is the county that introduced to the world the concept of a modern-day Islamic republic whose laws come from the Koran and not from a secular, man-made source. This form of government is a model for many in the Islamic world. As the 2002 Freedom House Survey notes, the roots of democracy and freedom are weakest in the fourteen Middle Eastern countries. If the clerical regime in Teheran is eventually overthrown by students and others clamoring for representative government and a civil society, it will show that the principles of a free society speak as much to those in the Islamic world as to those in the West. Those who claim to speak for constituencies in the developing world often state that representative government, the supremacy of civil law, and the protection of individual freedoms are Western values and not relevant to people in other parts of the world. The spread of democratic principles to Iran, no less, would refute this argument. It would also make the rest of the world safer since a democratic Iran would be unlikely to support fundamentalist terrorist organizations, as does the current regime.

Is promotion of the values of a free society elsewhere the most effective way a free society can protect itself against its enemies? Democracies do not engage in war against each other. Students might learn about the reforms instituted in Japan by General Douglas MacArthur after World War II. Since they became democratic, Japan and Germany—America's enemies in World War

II—have not fought any wars. The spread of democratic principles to all non-democratic countries would thus help make individual freedoms more secure in this country.

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Liberty vs. Security?

Mitchell B. Pearlstein

My understanding of the main ideas and safeguards undergirding the American criminal justice system goes back, literally, to what I learned in elementary school. I recall learning that it was better for ten guilty people to go free than for one innocent person to be imprisoned. I learned that such constitutional shields were essential since citizens (whom I remember as invariably portrayed in textbooks as noble and innocent) needed protection from government (which was implicitly conceived as always on the cusp of tyrannical). Thinking back, my early education in New York City public schools benefited from a remarkable civil libertarian strain.

I would acknowledge, with relief, that civil liberties have not taken nearly the hit I predicted they might in the wake of 9/11. Why not?

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Then again, federal buildings and world trade centers had yet to be blown up in the 1950s and '60s. And men, women, and children could still live, work, and play in solid confidence that the comparatively angelic young hoods and gang members of the time (like those in West Side Story*) would not keep them from living, unmaimed, to see another day.*

Under such sweeter circumstances, talk of "ten guilty men going free rather than one innocent man going to prison" was a civically satisfying abstraction. It spoke of American freedom and uniqueness. As a child, I do not recall fearing that such a safeguard threatened my well-being or that of my family, if for no other reason than there was no reason to fear everyday barbarism.

But what comes of such views and protections when barbarism of one kind or another is an everyday American event? What price in liberty will we increasingly pay for doing what we unquestionably need to do in order to protect ourselves?

One can only guess about the exact shape of that toll. But it's sadly clear that the kind of police-power restrictions stipulated by the Founders and consistently enlarged by courts ever since are viable over the long haul if, and only if, civilization reigns. In other words, if no sanity prevails in office buildings and in the streets, then constitutional and other buffers cannot survive as we have come to know them over two centuries-plus.

This, I assure you, is not a fevered pitch for ripping the soul out of the Bill of Rights and other examples of American civility and exceptionalism. Quite the opposite. It's regrettable recognition that American civil liberties will be ceaselessly threatened, inescapably so, as long as Americans themselves are violently threatened, whether by alien or native thugs.

The thoroughly American determination to be multiculturally and utterly fair says many good things about us. But it can also be taken to ridiculous and dangerous extremes.

Truth be told, I wrote the above neither recently nor even after the World Trade Center, and nearly 3,000 people, were erased from the New York City sky on September 11, 2001. I wrote it immediately after the bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City a half-dozen years earlier, in 1995, which followed the first terrorist attack on the World Trade Center in 1993. What have learned since those days?

To start, we've learned that we're really at war. Not an optional, sidebar, or rhetorical war, but a real one, the kind in which our enemies really do want to kill us. Lots of us.

We've learned that, while zealots on behalf of a poisonous brand of Islam are not the only people determined to destroy what America champions (witness Oklahoma City), no one else around the world is nearly as eager to detonate themselves in the process.

And despite the touch of melodrama in what I contended in the wake of the Oklahoma City bombing, I would acknowledge, with relief, that civil liberties have not taken nearly the hit I predicted they might. Why not?

One thankful reason is that, while terrorists of one sort or another seem to strike every other day somewhere in the world, large scale attacks on U.S. soil have been rare, perhaps remarkably so. At least as I write, this is so.

Related is the fact that it takes only a few months of relative peace for most people and institutions to revert to some measure of complacency. Or more accurately, I assume it's psychologically impossible to remain in a state of acute alertness for long stretches, meaning that energy and efforts generally will remain sporadic and weak when it comes to radically tightening law

enforcement screws. (The Constitution itself, backed by an army of defenders, is also an inoculating roadblock, of course.)

But I would also claim that never has a nation, in waging a pivotal war, worked so hard not to offend anyone. This thoroughly American determination to be multiculturally and utterly fair says many good things about us. But it can also be taken to ridiculous and dangerous extremes, as in a frequent and unquestioning opposition to any precaution that even hints at, or can be misrepresented as, racial or religious "profiling."

Despite what absolutist civil libertarians and others have claimed, governmental officials haven't even begun to pinch constitutional safeguards, never mind shredding them. If anything, we have erred on the side of doing too little to protect ourselves. I'm with Judge Robert Bork, who recently wrote: "A judicial system with rights of due process is crucial to a free society, but it is not designed for the protection of enemies engaged in armed conflict with us." Or, as a Minnesota friend has said, "While a political state has an obligation to do justice . . . it also has a fundamental obligation to secure the security of its citizens."

Getting even closer to the heart, my friend (a distinguished lawyer) argued a few months ago before an international audience in Europe: "Our *Federalist Papers* remind us of the objective to create a government that would be a 'palladium of free government' and a 'citadel of ordered liberty.' These objectives are impossible to realize in a culture of terror."

In a new world in which bravery is only one virtue in need of new spine, Americans have plenty to fear—not that a state of run-amok police is currently one of them. Yet all bets, unavoidably and lamentably, will be off if the terror that engulfed us on 9/11 inflames us again. And then again.

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America and the Crisis of Islam

Stephen Schwartz

In the aftermath of the atrocities of September 11, 2001, people of goodwill on both sides of the divide between the Judeo-Christian and Islamic worlds were filled with deep anxieties. For Westerners, it seemed that a dreadful clash of civilizations had become unavoidable. For

Muslims, it was clear that serious injury had been done to the most powerful nation on earth—a wound that could only call forth a terrible retribution. Many Jews and Christians seized on the belief that something evil in the faith of Muhammad had made 9/11 inevitable. Many Muslims feared that a new "crusade" against Islam would ensue.

But September 11, the U.S. military campaigns in Afghanistan and Iraq, and widespread debate over the future of the Arab and Islamic societies all dramatized a particular aspect of life in the contemporary world: after a millennia and a half of Islamic civilization, the Judeo-Christian West remained extraordinarily confused about this major development in the history of monotheistic religion. After 14 centuries of contact between the two, mutual comprehension was deferred until a hideous terrorist crime killed thousands in the world's greatest city. Islam then came to be identified in the Western mind, more than ever, with brutality, intolerance, and fanaticism.

It has become increasingly clear that wars to defend America and the West cannot be waged against Muslims, but, rather, must be fought for Muslims.

Our children need to learn that Islam, which shares with Judaism and Christianity an origin in the Abrahamic revelation, is not a monolith. With the liberation of Afghanistan from the Taliban and Iraq from the dictatorship of Saddam, it has become increasingly clear to Americans that wars to defend America and the West, as combat for the future of humanity, cannot be waged *against* Muslims, but, rather, must be fought *for* Muslims. That is, it is necessary to assist the vast majority of traditional Muslims—who share with Jews, Christians, and the rest of the world's inhabitants a desire to live in a secure and stable environment—in freeing their faith from the grip of extremism.

Yet clarity and honesty about the situation of Islam, so necessary to assessing the situation correctly, were often absent. Much debate has focused on the assurances of President George W. Bush, who repeatedly declared that Islam is a religion of peace. Political, religious, and academic apologists for Islamist extremism echoed these calming phrases blandly, arguing that any more penetrating scrutiny of the state of Islam today reflected stereotyping and prejudice. Numerous commentators argued that Islamist extremism reflected simple and comprehensible social and economic grievances. And some declared that Islamist extremism was merely an imitation of Western forms of totalitarianism, such as fascism and Communism, and had nothing at all to do with Islam.

In this context, our children should be taught that a majority of the world's traditional Muslims clearly believe that Islam is a religion of peace. Many Muslims have worked for progress in the countries where they are the majority, and have participated in Western society as loyal citizens and decline to blame the problems of Islam on the West. Their representatives, although typically excluded from international media and major academic exposure, argue that

the problem of extremism will only be solved by Muslims themselves, because the phenomenon originates within Islam. Many Muslims identify extremism with a struggle for the soul of Islam, and charge that powerful forces within the Islamic world community have turned the faith in an extremist, intolerant, separatist, and exclusionary direction.

Anti-extremist Muslims have declared that the real issue is neither poverty, nor underdevelopment, nor Arab grievances against Israel, nor resentment of American hegemony. Rather, it involves the deliberate fostering of hatred by a powerful element within Islam. This is a sect known as Wahhabism, the official Islamic sect of Saudi Arabia. Because of its control of Islam's two holiest sites, Mecca and Medina, as well as the immense oil revenues accrued to the Saudis at the end of the 20th century, a serious attempt has been made by supporters of Wahhabism to seize control of world Islam. With that aim achieved, the Wahhabi sectarians of Saudi Arabia would then launch "*jihad* against the world."

We must stop telling students that Saudi Arabia represents some ineffably mysterious society that we must approach reluctantly—especially when discussing the need for political change there.

Muslim opponents of Wahhabism have pointed out that, although it preaches *jihad* against non-Muslims, other Muslims have always been the greatest victims of Saudi-backed Wahhabis. Wahhabi doctrine declares that adherents to the faith of Muhammad who do not accept Wahhabi teaching are not true Muslims and must be killed. Wahhabism, however, is neither traditional nor conservative, the adjectives typically misapplied to Saudi Arabia. Rather, it is only 250 years old, having originated in the 18th century in central Arabia. From the start, Wahhabis have massacred Shi'a Muslims as well as the followers of Islamic spirituality known as Sufis. After the Wahhabi takeover of Mecca in 1924, they abolished the Islamic pluralism—the presence of differing Islamic legal schools, sects, and Sufi orders—that had always characterized the holy city, replacing it with a single interpretation, their own.

Wahhabism has kept the Saudi people, as well as the Muslims over whom it exercises dominance elsewhere, in a state of ignorance, fear, and dependency. That is the meaning of such peculiar customs as the Saudi ban on women driving, which is unique in the world. But the ordinary people of Saudi Arabia, who have gained education and access to technology in recent decades, have begun to protest against Wahhabi misrule. The rise of bin Laden and al Qaeda, and the terrorist atrocities committed by these ultra-Wahhabi elements, reflect the crisis inside Saudi Arabia, where the representatives of a discredited past seek to maintain their power by driving their subjects into fanatical nihilism and violence against the outside world.

"*Jihad* against the world" has therefore become especially useful for the Wahhabis and their Saudi patrons, to divert the attention of Saudi subjects from their own grievances. At the same time, Wahhabism has always maintained a two-faced policy of reliance on Western military sup-

port—provided first by the British and later by the U.S. and France—to maintain their dominion in the Arabian Peninsula while they plot *jihad*. Today the Saudi regime is caught between the hammer of their own ultraradical teaching and the anvil of their protection by the West.

We must stop telling ourselves and others, including the students we teach, that Saudi Arabia represents some ineffably mysterious, ancient society that we must approach reluctantly, with extreme caution, and at arm's length—especially when discussing the need for political change there. In particular, we must stop telling ourselves and others that the present Saudi government is a bulwark against a potentially more extreme Islamist regime. No form of Islamist politics is more extreme than that which forbids women to drive cars, and which cuts off a whole people, in a country that should be an open center of world Islam, from the rest of the globe.

Our students should learn that the crisis of Islam is an expression of the internal contradictions of the Saudi regime, a corrupt and reactionary absolute monarchy whose rulers do not even perceive the depth of the crisis that faces them. A true global education requires telling our students the truth—complex as it is—about the challenges we face and the dangers that lie ahead.

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The Doctrine of Pre-emption

Stanley Kurtz

September 11 introduced Americans to a fundamentally new kind of security threat—not just terrorism, but large-scale terrorism employing weapons of mass destruction. The assault on the World Trade Center may not have been a nuclear strike, or an attack with chemical or biological weapons. Yet the destruction that ensued did involve mass death. The initial (1993) basement bomb attack on the World Trade Center was intended to topple one of the towers onto the other. That would have killed everyone in both towers, along with many more people in the surrounding buildings, causing casualties equivalent to a nuclear strike on a small city. And no matter who was responsible for the anthrax attacks that immediately followed September 11, that incident proved that terrorism and weapons of mass destruction can combine to pose a deadly threat to the lives and freedom of the American people.

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The two great antagonists of the Cold War—the Western democracies and the Soviet Union—each had many nuclear weapons trained on the other. Yet, for the most part the Cold War was not characterized by all-out "hot" conflict, as was World War II. Despite local wars in Korea and Vietnam, the nuclear "balance of terror" succeeded in preventing either side from launching a nuclear strike—though they would come close during the Cuban missile crisis. Yet for the most part, during the Cold War years, the balance of nuclear terror succeeded in preventing all-out war.

In the post-September 11 world, however, America's security situation is markedly different. If a terrorist group like al Qaeda manages to purchase a nuclear weapon from Iran or North Korea, and then explodes it in an American city, whom can we hit in retaliation? Once a nation can secretly sell nuclear weapons to terrorists willing to destroy American cities—even at the cost of their own lives—the principle of retaliation on which the Cold War balance of terror depended becomes irrelevant, with potentially dire consequences.

If a terrorist group like al Qaeda manages to purchase a nuclear weapon from Iran or North Korea, and then explodes it in an American city, whom can we hit in retaliation?

Another danger in this age of proliferation is nuclear blackmail. Although it was a Communist (and therefore "revolutionary") country, the old Soviet regime was actually fairly careful and "conservative" in its handling of nuclear weapons. The Soviets valued stability and were reluctant to risk direct conflict with the United States.

Yet the leaders of some regimes are not so careful. Former Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, for example, was famous for leading his country into dangerous wars—against Iran, and against Kuwait and the United States. Once armed with nuclear weapons, a leader like Saddam Hussein could invade a neighboring country, then keep the United States from pushing him back by threatening to drop a nuclear bomb on American troops or to plant a nuclear bomb in an American city. That would be a very risky action, since the United States could always launch a retaliatory nuclear strike. But to avoid the possible loss of American and Iraqi life in a nuclear exchange, the United States might be forced to back down in the face of a nuclear threat. So the proliferation of nuclear weapons among aggressive and risk-taking leaders like Saddam Hussein raises the possibility of a world plagued by dangerous games of nuclear "blackmail."

To prevent terrorism with weapons of mass destruction, and to prevent nuclear blackmail by the leaders of rogue regimes, the United States has declared a new national security policy. When no other alternative is available, that policy allows the United States to intervene militarily to prevent rogue regimes from developing nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons.

In the past, it has been possible to know with some certainty that the people of the United States were under attack. Armies or navies massing and preparing to strike could be detected,

and nuclear missiles could be identified on radar screens. Even surprise attacks were directed against our military, not against American civilians. Yet once nuclear terrorism and blackmail become the greatest threats to America's security, it is no longer possible to wait until our own armed forces are attacked to launch a defensive war (as, for example, when the Japanese surprise attack on our naval forces in Pearl Harbor started World War II). As we discovered on 9/11, by the time we know an attack on our citizens is underway, it is too late. In an age of proliferating nuclear weapons, a surprise terrorist attack could wipe out an entire American city before our armed forces have a chance to protect us. So in a world of mass-scale terrorism and nuclear proliferation, it has become necessary to protect ourselves by displacing rogue regimes before they can develop nuclear weapons.

In an age of proliferating nuclear weapons, a surprise terrorist attack could wipe out an entire American city before our armed forces have a chance to protect us.

Despite the dangers of proliferating weapons of mass destruction in this new and unstable world, we can still hope that nuclear weapons might never be used again. To prevent the likely loss of more than 100,000 American soldiers in an invasion of Japan, the United States was forced to use nuclear bombs to bring an end to World War II. After that, for all its dangers, the Cold War balance of nuclear terror succeeded in preventing full-scale war between the great powers. Today, our challenge is different. We must vigilantly carry out the war against terror by hunting down the members of organizations like al Qaeda. And when no other choice remains, we must displace dangerous and aggressive dictators bent on nuclear blackmail, like Saddam Hussein. In a dangerous and uncertain world, there are no foolproof guarantees of our security. Yet if we diligently prosecute the war against terror, there is good reason to believe that we can safeguard the freedom and security of the American people.

Stanley Kurtz is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution and a contributing editor of National Review Online.

Address to the U.S. Congress

Tony Blair

On June 26, 2003 the U.S. Congress voted to award Tony Blair the Congressional Gold Medal, America's highest civilian honor, for his steadfast support of the U.S.-led Iraq war. Mr. Blair is only the second British leader ever to receive the honor. Following are excerpts from the text of the speech he delivered before a joint session of Congress on July 18, 2003.

Mr. Speaker, Mr. Vice President, Honorable Members of Congress. Thank you most sincerely for voting to award me the Congressional Gold Medal. But you, like me, know who the real heroes are: those brave servicemen and women, yours and ours, who fought the war, and risk their lives still.

Our tribute to them should be measured in this way: by showing them and their families that they did not strive or die in vain but that through their sacrifice, future generations can live in greater peace, prosperity and hope. . . .

. . . I feel a most urgent sense of mission about today's world. September 11 was not an isolated event, but a tragic prologue. Iraq; another act; and many further struggles will be set upon this stage before it's over.

There never has been a time when the power of America was so necessary; or so misunderstood; or when, except in the most general sense, a study of history provides so little instruction for our present day.

Ours are not Western values. They are the universal values of the human spirit. Any time ordinary people are given the chance to choose, the choice is the same. Freedom not tyranny. Democracy not dictatorship.

We were all reared on battles between great warriors, between great nations, between powerful forces and ideologies that dominated entire continents. These were struggles for conquest, for land or money. The wars were fought by massed armies. The leaders were openly acknowledged: the outcomes decisive. Today, none of us expect our soldiers to fight a war on our territory. The immediate threat is not war between the world's powerful nations. Why? Because we all have too much to lose.

Because technology, communication, trade, and travel are bringing us ever closer. Because in the last 50 years countries like yours and mine have trebled their growth and standard of living. Because even those powers like Russia, China, or India can see the horizon of future wealth clearly and know they are on a steady road toward it. And because all nations that are free value that freedom, will defend it absolutely, but have no wish to trample on the freedom of others.

We are bound together as never before. This coming together provides us with unprecedented opportunity, but also makes us uniquely vulnerable.

The threat comes because, in another part of the globe, there is shadow and darkness where not all the world is free, where many millions suffer under brutal dictatorship; where a third of our planet lives in a poverty beyond anything even the poorest in our societies can imagine; and where a fanatical strain of religious extremism has arisen, that is a mutation of the true and peaceful faith of Islam. And because in the combination of these afflictions, a new and deadly virus has emerged.

The virus is terrorism, whose intent to inflict destruction is unconstrained by human feeling; and whose capacity to inflict it is enlarged by technology.

This is a battle that can't be fought or won only by armies. We are so much more powerful in all conventional ways than the terrorist. Yet even in all our might, we are taught humility. In the end, it is not our power alone that will defeat this evil. Our ultimate weapon is not our guns but our beliefs.

There is a myth. That though we love freedom, others don't. That our attachment to freedom is a product of our culture. That freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law are American values or Western values. That Afghan women were content under the lash of the Taliban. That Saddam was beloved by his people. That Milosevic was Serbia's savior.

As Britain knows, all predominant power seems for a time invincible; but in fact it is transient. The question is, what do you leave behind?

Ours are not Western values. They are the universal values of the human spirit and anywhere, any time, ordinary people are given the chance to choose, the choice is the same. Freedom not tyranny. Democracy not dictatorship. The rule of law, not the rule of the secret police.

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The spread of freedom is the best security for the free. It is our last line of defense and our first line of attack. Just as the terrorist seeks to divide humanity in hate, so we have to unify it around an idea, and that idea is liberty. We must find the strength to fight for this idea; and the compassion to make it universal.

Abraham Lincoln said: those that deny freedom to others, deserve it not for themselves. It is a sense of justice that makes moral the love of liberty.

In some cases, where our security is under direct threat, we will have recourse to arms. In others, it will be by force of reason. But in all cases to the same end: that the liberty we seek is not for some but for all. For that is the only true path to victory.

But first, we must explain the danger. Our new world rests on order. The danger is disorder and in today's world it now spreads like contagion. Terrorists and the states that support them don't have large armies or precision weapons. They don't need them. The weapon is chaos.

The purpose of terrorism is not the single act of wanton destruction. It is the reaction it seeks to provoke: economic collapse; the backlash; the hatred; the division; the elimination of tolerance; until societies cease to reconcile their differences but become defined by them. Kashmir, the Middle East, Chechyna, Indonesia, Africa. Barely a continent or nation is unscathed. . . .

. . . So: America must listen as well as lead. But don't ever apologize for your values.

Tell the world why you're proud of America. Tell them that when the Star-spangled Banner starts, Americans get to their feet: Hispanics, Irish, Italians, Central Americans, Eastern Europeans, Jews; white, Asian, black; those who go back to the early settlers and those whose English is the same as some New York cabbies I've dealt with, but whose sons and daughters could run for this Congress.

Tell them why they stand upright and respectful. Not because some state official told them to. But because whatever race, color, class, or creed they are, being American means being free. That's what makes them proud.

As Britain knows, all predominant power seems for a time invincible; but in fact it is transient. The question is, What do you leave behind? What you can bequeath to this anxious world is the light of liberty. That is what this struggle against terrorist groups or states is about.

We're not fighting for domination. We're not fighting for an American world, though we want a world in which America is at ease. We're not fighting for Christianity, but against religious fanaticism of all kinds. This is not a war of civilizations, because each civilization has a unique capacity to enrich the stock of human heritage.

We are fighting for the inalienable right of human kind, black or white, Christian or not, left, right, or merely indifferent, to be free. Free to raise a family in love and hope. Free to earn a living and be rewarded by your own efforts. Free not to bend your knee to any man in fear. Free to be you so long as being you does not impair the freedom of others. That's what we're fighting for. And that's a battle worth fighting.

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I know it's hard on America. And in some small corner of this vast country, in Nevada or Idaho, these places I've never been but always wanted to go, there's a guy getting on with his life, perfectly happily, minding his own business, saying to you, the political leaders of this nation: Why me? Why us? Why America?

And the only answer is: because destiny put you in this place in history, in this moment in time, and the task is yours to do.

And our job, my nation that watched you grow, that you've fought alongside and now fights alongside you, that takes enormous pride in our alliance and great affection in our common bond, our job is to be there with you.

You're not going to be alone. We'll be with you in this fight for liberty. And if our spirit is right, and our courage firm, the world will be with us.

Tony Blair is prime minister of the United Kingdom.

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Recommended Resources for Teachers

U.S. HISTORY AND CIVICS

Books

Adler, Mortimer. ***We Hold These Truths: Understanding the Ideas and Ideals of the Constitution.*** New York: Collier Books, 1987.
A thought-provoking look at the foundations of our government, how it has changed, and the ideals to which it should aspire.

Berns, Walter. ***Making Patriots.*** Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.
A keen and passionate look at how even the most self-interested of men can become patriots. Draws heavily from the life and works of Lincoln.

Boorstin, Daniel J. ***The Americans: The Colonial Experience.*** New York: Random House, 1964.
The first in a trilogy, this book examines how the beliefs and habits of America's early settlers shaped our lives today.

———. ***The Americans: The National Experience.*** New York: Random House, 1967.
Second in the trilogy, it explores the patters of living that shaped the character of the United States from the Revolution to the Civil War.

———. ***The Americans: The Democratic Experience.*** New York: Random House, 1974.
Concludes Boorstin's trilogy with an account of post-Civil War America.

Bowen, Catherine Drinker. ***Miracle at Philadelphia: The Story of the Constitutional Convention, May to September 1787.*** Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1966.
A classic and splendidly wrought account of that seminal event.

Brookhiser, Richard. ***Founding Father: Rediscovering George Washington.*** New York: Free Press, 1996.
Traces Washington's career as soldier and statesman and shows how his character and values shaped our early politics.

Cheney, Lynne V. ***America: A Patriotic Primer.*** New York: Simon & Schuster, 2002.
Written by our the former chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities, this book paints for young children a patriotic portrait of America from A-Z.

Crevecoeur, J. Hector St. John. ***Letters from an American Farmer.*** 1782. Reprint, edited by Susan Manning. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.
Considered by some the first work of American literature, this classic addresses the question of national identity and celebrates America's ideals.

De Toqueville, Alexander. ***Democracy in America.***
An American classic written from the perspective of a visiting foreigner that addresses America's unique political system and form of government.

Davis, David Brion and Steven Mintz, eds. ***The Boisterous Sea of Liberty: Documentary History of America from Discovery through the Civil War.*** New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.
An invaluable anthology of original historical documents.

Educational Policies Commission. ***The Education of Free Men in American Democracy.*** Washington, DC: National Education Association, 1941.
Written at the outset of World War II by George S. Counts, a professor of education, this work eloquently explains what American democracy is, why it is precious, and how it must be defended—and the schools' role in relation thereto.

Ellis, Joseph J. ***Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation.*** New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000.
Focusing on six critical moments, this book shows that the truths we now hold to be self-evident were quite contentious in our early history.

Forbes, Esther. ***Johnny Tremain.*** Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1943.
Riveting historical fiction centering on a boy's life in Boston during the Revolution.

Kammen, Michael. ***A Machine That Would Go of Itself: The Constitution in American Culture.*** New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1986.
Described as a "landmark study of the cultural impact of the American Constitution."

Library of America, ed. ***Lincoln: Selected Speeches and Writings.*** New York: Vintage Books, 1992.
A wide-ranging collection of Honest Abe's writings.

Lipset, Seymour Martin. ***American Exceptionalism: A Double-Edged Sword.*** W.W. Norton, 1996.
This book contemplates the widespread notion of American exceptionalism and diverse culture.

MacDonald, Forrest. ***Novus Ordo Seclorum: The Intellectual Origins of the Constitution.*** Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1985.
A classic.

McCullough, David. ***John Adams.*** Simon & Schuster, 2001.
Critically acclaimed biography of the second President of the United States.

Middlekauff, Robert. ***The Glorious Cause: The American Revolution 1763 - 1789.*** New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.
An account of the Revolution that aims to separate fact from fiction.

Morgan, Edmund S. ***Inventing the People: The Rise of Popular Sovereignty in England and America.*** Reprint, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988.
An analysis of the concept of popular sovereignty.

Novak, Michael. ***The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism.*** New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982.
A groundbreaking theological and political defense of democratic capitalism as ideal and as reality.

Pangle, Lorraine Smith and Thomas L. Pangle. ***The Learning of Liberty: The Educational Ideas of the American Founders.*** Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1993.
An exploration of the Founders' views on public education and civic instruction.

Rabb, Theodore K. and Sherrin Marshall, ed. ***Origins of the Modern West: Essays and Sources in Renaissance and Early Modern European History.*** New York: McGraw-Hill, 1993.
A look at political, military, social, economic, artistic, scientific and religious history during the Renaissance. Includes a chapter on religious dissent.

Remini, Robert. ***Henry Clay: Statesman for the Union.*** New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1991.
A powerful biography of one of our more interesting statesmen.

Schlesinger, Jr., Arthur M. ***The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multi-Cultural Society.*** Rev. and enl. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1998.
An examination of multiculturalism gone awry. Includes an annotated list of core books on the American experience.

Wheeler, Richard, ed. ***Voices of 1776: The Story of the American Revolution in the Words of Those Who Were There.*** Reprint, New York: Crowell, 1972.
A thrilling compilation of Revolutionary War-era letters, journals and diaries.

Wood, Gordon S. ***The American Revolution: A History.*** New York: The Modern Library, 2002.
Written by an eminent historian of the Revolution and Constitution, this short book deals not only with the military conflict but also with the emergence of our national commitments to freedom, equality and constitutionalism.

Articles

American Federation of Teachers, ***"Education for Democracy: A Statement of Principles,"*** 1987.
A strong statement of how to teach students about democracy and engender patriotism. Includes "guidelines" for strengthening the teaching of democratic values.

Center for Civic Education, ***"National Standards for Civics and Government,"*** 1994.
Explicates a number of central themes for teachers to focus upon from America's founding documents.

Hanson, Victor Davis, ***"The Civic Education America Needs,"*** City Journal, Summer 2002.
http://www.city-journal.org/html/12_3_the_civic.html
Makes a powerful case for a rigorous pro-America civics education.

Websites

American Political Science Association
http://www.apsanet.org/CENnet/thisconstitution
A set of essays commissioned for the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution by prominent history, law and political science scholars. A great "one-stop" information source for teachers.

The Articles of Confederation
http://www.yorkheritage.org/articles/html/articles.html
An online version of the Articles of Confederation courtesy of York Heritage.

Back Pack Catalogue
http://www.thebackpack.com
Targeted to home-schoolers but useful for all, this site sells books, music and other resources on U.S. history (and other subjects). Some have a Christian orientation; all feature a healthy dose of patriotism.

Bill of Rights
http://memory.loc.gov/const/bor.html
An online version of the Bill of Rights, courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Bill of Rights Institute
http://www.billofrightsinstitute.org
Lots of great, free lesson plans dealing with the Founders, U.S. history and citizenship, including one focused on the civic values that Americans demonstrated on 9/11/01.

Blood of Heroes
http://64.177.83.63/liberty/email.htm
A website encouraging Americans to think about the vital importance of improving our children's knowledge of history and transference of our legacy of liberty from one generation to another.

Chapel of the Four Chaplains
www.fourchaplains.org/story.html
An inspiring story of valor and selflessness during World War II with parallels to the heroism of the passengers on United flight 93, which crashed in Pennsylvania.

Common Sense
http://www.ushistory.org/paine/commonsense/index.htm
An online edition of Thomas Paine's classic tract challenging Britain's authority over the American colonies.

Congress for Kids
www.congressforkids.net
An interactive sites for kids to learn the history and workings of Congress beginning with the 13 colonies.

Declaration of Independence
http://memory.loc.gov/const/declar.html
A convenient electronic version of an essential primary source, courtesy of the Library of Congress.

Dialogue on Freedom
http://www.dialoguconfreedom.com
Initiated by Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy and sponsored by the American Bar Association, this site explores American values and civic traditions by fostering communication between legal experts and high school students.

Emancipation Proclamation
http://www.nps.gov/ncro/anti/emancipation.html
An online version of the Civil War's most popular document granting freedom to the South's slave population.

Federalist Papers
http://memory.loc.gov/const/fed/fedpapers.html
A convenient online collection of these classic essays by Hamilton, Madison and Jay, meant to explain the new Constitution and build support for its ratification.

The Founding Documents
http://www.constitution.org/cs_found.htm
Includes images of the founding documents along with additional papers such as a transcript from the 1787 debates in the Federal Convention.

"Four Freedoms,"Franklin D. Roosevelt's speech to Congress, January 6, 1941.
http://www.libertynet.org/~edcivic/fdr.html
Celebrates the "four freedoms" that the U.S. strove to preserve in World War II.

Freedom House Surveys
www.freedomhouse.org
Online survey of political rights and civil liberties around the world.

Gettysburg Address
http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/gadd/4403.html
Lincoln's classic text here offered in several dozen languages.

Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History
http://www.gilderlehrman.org
An extraordinary variety of resources, textbook chapters and lesson plans on America's history and founding ideals.

Images of the Revolution
http://www.archives.gov/digital_classroom/lessons/american_revolution_images/revolution_images.html
Paintings and engravings of certain major events in the American Revolution

John Locke's Second Treatise on Government
http://www.liberty1.org/2dtreat.htm
An online version of this classic political text from which we derive the principle of government by the consent of the governed.

K12 Patriotic Lessons
http://patriot.k12.com
An online curriculum for teaching patriotism.

Library of Congress

http://www.loc.gov

An invaluable resource for educators. Offers links to the American "founding documents" as well as the popular "Today in History" series, information on pending congressional legislation and the world's largest "card catalogue."

Liberty Fund, Inc.

http://www.libertyfund.org

An educational foundation dedicated to promoting freedom and responsibility. Offers many resources exploring "the interrelationship of liberty and responsibility in individual life, society, governance, or economics."

National Geographic

http://www.nationalgeographic.com/xpeditions/lessons/01/g68/iraqoil.html

Lesson Plan for studying oil and water in Iraq and understanding the role of oil and water in Middle East conflict

National Archives' Digital Classroom

http://www.archives.gov/digital_classroom/index.html

An excellent resource that helps document the rights of American citizens and the actions of their legislators.

The Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass: An American Slave

http://www.history.rochester.edu/class/douglass/duglas11.txt

Mandatory reading on the ills of slavery written by an extraordinary American.

Patrick Henry's Speech to the House of Burgesses

http://libertyonline.hypermall.com/henry-liberty.html

Patrick Henry's famous "give me liberty or give me death" speech.

The Price They Paid

http://www.ctssar.org/articles/price_paid.htm

This article tells the story of what happened to the brave men who signed the Declaration of Independence during and after the war.

Restoring America Project

http://www.4america.com

Dedicated to restoring moral character to America's youth and designed for secondary school students and teachers, this site provides information about celebrated historical figures.

Ronald Reagan's speech on the Challenger Disaster, January 28, 1986
http://www.reaganfoundation.org/reagan/speeches/challenger.asp
An extraordinary speech delivered by President Reagan at a time of national sorrow.

"Rules of Civility and Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation"
http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/civility/transcript.html
Drawn from George Washington's papers, these maxims are believed to be the moral foundations upon which he built his character.

Star Spangled Banner
http://web8.si.edu/nmah/htdocs/ssb-old/2_home/fs2.html
A repository of information on the US flag

United States Constitution
http://memory.loc.gov/const/const.html
A handy online version of our nation's governing centerpiece, courtesy of the Library of Congress.

U.S. History
http://www.ushistory.org
Billed as the "Congress of Websites," this site offers a host of resources on the period in our early history when Philadelphia was the nation's capital.

Virginia Statute on Religious Freedom
http://www.firstfreedom.org/tjstatute.html
In 1786, when James Madison helped sweep this statute into law, it was the first time in the history of western civilization that a government guaranteed freedom of religion and separation of religious affairs from the control of the state.

Washington's Farewell Address
http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/washing.htm
An online version of Washington's Farewell Address.

TERRORISM, THE MIDDLE EAST AND ISLAMIC HISTORY

Books

Bennett, William J. ***Why We Fight: Moral Clarity and the War on Terrorism.*** New York: Doubleday, 2002.
Stands up for America and for moral absolutes through an examination of the guiding principles of the war on terror.

Elshtain, Jean Bethke. ***Just War Against Terror: The Burden of American Power in a Violent World.*** Basic Books, April 2003.

Kramer, Martin. ***Ivory Towers on Sand.*** Washington, DC: Washington Institute for Near East Policy, 2001.
A brilliant critique of the failure of Middle Eastern studies in American academe.

Lewis, Bernard. ***The Middle East: A Brief History of the Last 2,000 Years.*** New York: Scribner, 1995.
Middle Eastern history explained by the Western world's foremost expert on that subject.

Lewis, Bernard. ***What Went Wrong? Western Impact and Middle Eastern Response.*** New York: Oxford University Press, 2002.
A fascinating exploration of the tensions between the Middle East and the West.

Articles

Lewis, Bernard, ***"The Revolt of Islam,"*** The New Yorker, November 19, 2001, 50-63.
http://www.newyorker.com/fact/content/?011119fa_FACT2
America's foremost scholar of Islam explains how the religion's conflict with the West began and how it might end.

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Lewis, Bernard, ***"The Roots of Muslim Rage,"*** The Atlantic, September 1990.
http://www.theatlantic.com/issues/90sep/rage.htm
A prescient article describing the history of the Muslim world that is exceptionally helpful in understanding the present conflict.

"Translation of Letter Left by Hijackers," Los Angeles Times, September 28, 2001.
http://www.latimes.com/la-092901trans.story
A direct translation of a letter—including chapter and verse from the Koran—that the FBI says was left by hijackers of three of the four flights that crashed on September 11th.

Weigel, George et al. ***"In a Time of War,"*** First Things, December 2001.
http://www.firstthings.com/ftissues/ft0112/opinion/editorial.html
Provides insight into how current assumptions depart from traditional just war theory.

Zakaria, Fareed, ***"The Politics of Rage: Why Do They Hate Us?"*** Newsweek, October 15, 2001.
http://www.msnbc.com/news/639057.asp?cp1=1#BODY
Offers sharp insight into the roots of anti-American sentiment in the Middle East.

Websites

Daniel Pipes
http://www.danielpipes.org
A wealth of information on the Middle East assembled by an authoritative commentator. Valuable for teachers seeking background on that region and on Islam.

Q&A Embedded Filmmaker on Iraq War
http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2003/05/0516_030516_iraqreporter.html
Interview with a journalist who was on assignment with US Marines on the front line.

Encarta—Terrorism
http://encarta.msn.com/encnet/refpages/Refarticle.aspx?refid=761564344&pn=1
An encyclopedia introduction to terrorism with embedded links to articles on related topics such as chemical and biological warfare, Islam, and the September 11 attacks.

Geography Shapes Nature of War in Iraq
http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2003/03/0327_030327_wargeography.html
A look at the basic geographic features of Iraq which most influence the course of the war.

Iraq—A Country Study
http://lcweb2.loc.gov/frd/cs/iqtoc.html
An online version of the Handbook on Iraq from the Library of Congress.

CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT, AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND HISTORICAL FICTION

Books

Chambers, Whittaker. ***Witness.*** New York: Random House, 1952.
A useful if unexpected book for gaining perspective on the war against terrorism and an understanding of the demands of long, grim and essential struggles.

Gibbon, Peter H. ***A Call to Heroism: Renewing America's Vision of Greatness.*** New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2002.
A sort of curricular Mount Rushmore, combining profiles of dozens of heroes with a careful discussion of why educators should teach children about such people.

Hale, Edward Everett. ***The Man Without a Country.*** Boston: Tickner and Fields, 1865.
A classic tale that reminds us of patriotic duty and the value of loyalty and identity.

Keith, Harold. ***Rifles for Watie.*** New York: Crowell, 1957.
A vibrant children's novel that views the Civil War through the eyes of a young Union soldier.

Levinson, Daniel J. and T. W. Adorno. ***The Authoritarian Personality.*** New York: Harper, 1950.
A classic psychological study of tyrannical personalities.

Morrow, Honore and Edward Shenton. ***On to Oregon!*** New York: W. Morrow & Company, 1946.
A wonderful children's book that tells the true story of how 13-year-old John Sanger looked after his six siblings when their parents died on the Oregon Trail.

Websites

American Girls Collection
http://www.americangirl.com/agcn/
History comes alive through stories of spunky (fictitious) girls from the Revolution to the present.

Patriotism
http://www.midgefrazel.net/patriotism.html
A website with links to classroom resources for teaching about American history, freedom and patriotism.

Why This Report?

Americans will debate for many years to come the causes and implications of the September 11 attacks on New York City and Washington, as well as the foiled attack that led to the crash of United Airlines flight 93 in a Pennsylvania field. For two years now, we have been chewing on it, agonizing about it, arguing about how to memorialize it, writing and painting and composing about it—all the things that a nation and its people do to digest, understand, and begin to recover from a cataclysm. This will continue.

Between the first and second "anniversaries" of 9/11/01, two further developments deepened our awareness of the dangerous world we inhabit and of America's role therein. The first and larger of these was the successful war to liberate Iraq from its dictator and his murderous regime. The second was the renewal of terrorist attacks upon Americans and others, most vividly in Bali in October and Riyadh in May, but also in Kuwait, Amman, Mombasa, and elsewhere, as well as ominous signs of nuclear activity by such rogue states as North Korea and Iran.

In these challenging times, educators rightly wonder about their proper role. What should they teach young Americans? How should they prepare tomorrow's citizenry? What is most important for students to learn? How best to respond to their questions and concerns? What are the implications for the K-12 curriculum and for the work of teachers? These are solemn, weighty questions, and there is every reason to expect them to linger.

Teachers know this better than anyone, and lots of them need no help or advice in fulfilling that responsibility. They're knowledgeable, savvy, creative, caring and—may I say it?—patriotic, as many fine teachers have always been. They love our country and the ideals for which it stands.

Others, though, are less certain. They do not know as much as they would like about these matters or are unsure how best to present them to schoolchildren. They depend on textbooks, supplementary materials, and lesson plans prepared by others. They're not sure what to teach, what's appropriate for their pupils to learn, and what their stance should be on these vexing and controversial issues. Our goal for this report is to lend them a hand, to furnish constructive advice and helpful information to educators who earnestly seek to do right by students while tackling some of the most perplexing and difficult challenges that educators face.

—Chester E. Finn, Jr., from the foreword

With essays by Richard Rodriguez, Victor Davis Hanson, Lynne Cheney, Craig Kennedy, Andrew Rotherham, Kay Hymowitz, William Damon, William Bennett, Lamar Alexander, William Galston, Jeffrey Mirel, Sheldon M. Stern, Amy Kass, E.D. Hirsch, Jr., James Q. Wilson, Theodore Rabb, Stanley Kurtz, *and others*

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